The Social Contract

Vol. X, No. 1 Fall 1999

Six Billion– and Counting

Highlights

In our feature section we print the testimony given by several experts before the House Immigration Sub-committee concerning the impact of immigration on low-skilled American workers:

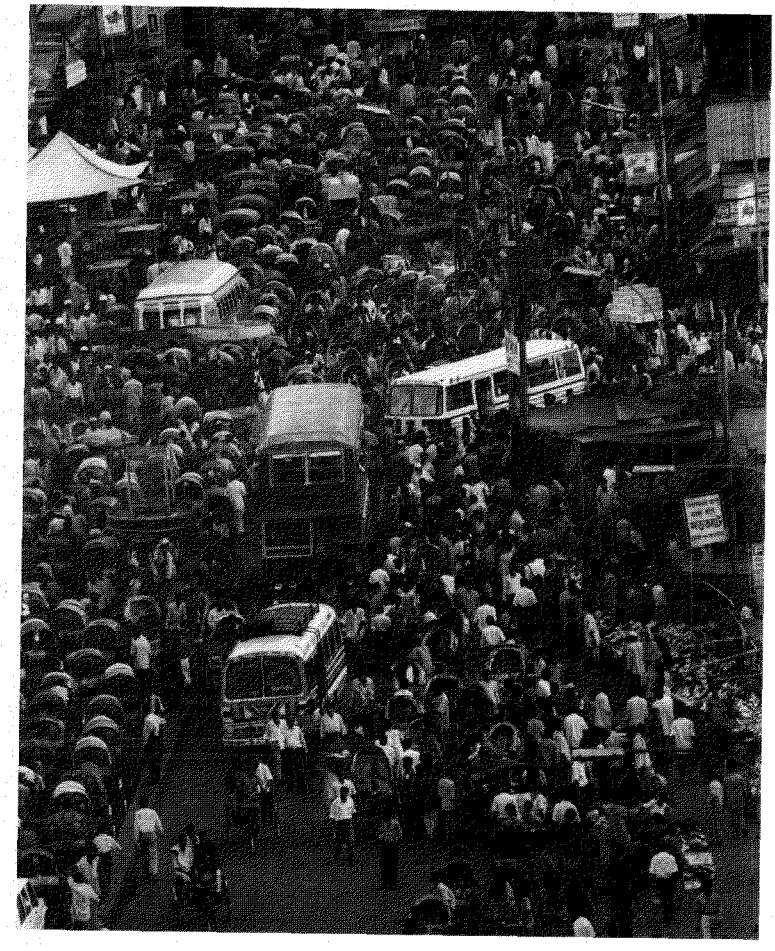
Steven Camarota
Vernon M. Briggs, Jr.
Roy Beck
L. Randall Wray
Georges Vernez

The United Nations chose October 12 as the date to symbolize world population exceeding six billion. Comments by:

William Dickinson
Dan Walters
Charley Reese

Don Barnett writes that new immigrants are keeping welfare and related programs in business.

William Buchanan says HR 73 is needed legislation to counter the flood of birthright citizens.



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see p. 39

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About The Social Contract

The English philosopher John Locke, whose thinking helped inspire the American revolution, said that society should be governed by an understood set of values he termed "the social contract." Under the social contract, governments have obligations to their citizens, and citizens have responsibilities to society.

Most great public issues are basically moral and ethical ones. What is the right thing to do? How do we decide what we think is right? When "rights" collide, which ones take precedence? The concept of the social contract helps us sort out the difficult issues confronting American society today and helps us find balance.

Each quarter, The Social Contract *journal examines trends, events and ideas that could unravel America's delicate social fabric. Key topics addressed by this journal:*

- *Human population issues, including absolute size, rate of growth and distribution. Do cherished American ideals prosper or suffer through further population growth?*
- *Immigration issues. In order to best facilitate meeting the highest goals of the American people, (1) how many immigrants should we admit? (2) who should be admitted, and (3) how can we humanely enforce the rules?*
- *Language, assimilation, culture and national unity considerations. What are the shared values necessary to the maintenance of our social contract?*
- *The balance of individual rights and civic responsibilities. Since the previous issues are so often framed in terms of rights, what are the balancing obligations?*
- *Other nations' efforts at guarding or creating their own social contracts. What practical insight can be gained from observing the failures and successes in nation-building by other societies?*

The Social Contract *explores these complex and interrelated issues with articles varying greatly in outlook and philosophy in the attempt to further vigorous public debate.*

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THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

Vol. X, No. 1 Fall 1999

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The Devil Knows Latin
Why America Needs the Classical Tradition

by E. Christian Kopff

"Kopff is a distinguished teacher and an independent thinker—vital, though rare, qualities these days in classics' eleventh hour."
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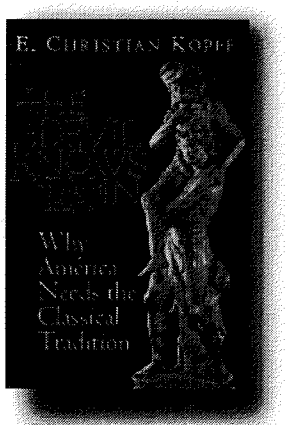
—**Theodore Pappas,** Executive Editor, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*



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A Note from the Editor

The American economy has never been stronger, we are assured. People are spending more, two-income families are saving even less, and official unemployment figures are relatively low (by post-World War II standards). Lost in all the rosy economic reporting is that immigration policy is fostering the creation of pockets of hard-core poverty, with "Appalachias" springing up in our farming heartland. Social service agencies are being pressed as never before and schools are overflowing with additional students. Labor contractors grease the wheels of immigration from Mexico. New migration chains extend their reach into urban areas, with crime and health problems being just some of the consequences.

In this issue of *The Social Contract* we are pleased to present articles taken from testimony about the impact of immigration on low-skilled workers and on American minority communities. This testimony was given on March 11, 1999 before the U. S. House Sub-committee on Immigration & Claims. Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas) has been holding a series of oversight hearings on immigration-related problems. In the past, the valuable information and insights of experts in the field did not reach far beyond the Capitol Hill hearing rooms. A couple of words on news broadcasts or a line or two in wire service stories, along with the odd mention in professional newsletters was about all that would come out of these valuable sessions. Sometimes years later, the hearings would be published by the Government Printing Office, where they would gather dust in Government document libraries scattered across the country.

Thanks to the Internet, the prepared statements of specialists are now being made available. In the case of the immigration topic, you can go to www.house.gov/lamarsmith. When you reach his homepage, then click on "Immigration." There you will find testimony from hearings, as well as press releases on immigration. We, in turn, will be publishing some of the best of these in article form and distributing them to wider audiences via our print and online editions of *The Social Contract.* Readers can also link to Rep. Smith's homepage from the www.numbersusa.com website. Click on "Moving Congress" and then click on the Texas Congressional delegation list, where you will find Rep. Smith.

As we go to press, we want to observe Y6B (Year Six Billion). Over the past century, world population has risen from an estimated 1.6 billion in 1900 to 6 billion — and rising — in 1999. Three quarters of the 1000-fold increase in human numbers since agriculture emerged 10,000 years ago occurred in this century — that is 75 percent of the absolute increase in 1 percent of the time. Keeping all of them and their offspring fed, without ravaging our planet, is the challenge. At these levels, it probably can't be done. What we in the United States need to do is take care of our own portion of the earth. We can't force others to live as we think they should.

Lastly, in case you hadn't heard, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott opines that the United States will not exist in its current form in the 21st Century because, as he and his associates believe, nationhood throughout the world has become obsolete. You may recall Talbott's piece in *Time* magazine, "The Birth of the Global Nation." There he said that he was looking forward to government run by "one global authority" — no "nativist" immigration controls, but large doses of enforced "diversity" and multiculturalism, and a world economy. Talbott recently told the *New York Times* that leaders need "strategic patience. We have to be calm and steady and have a clear sense of purpose when that dynamic is discouraging, as it is today."

We can't ever say that we weren't given plenty of advance notice.

WAYNE LUTTON, Ph.D.

Editor

Cover Photo © AP/Wide World Photos
A street in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, the world's most densely populated nation.

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Letters to the Editor

EDITOR:

Imagine my surprise upon opening the summer issue of *The Social Contract* to find myself extensively quoted by Diana Hull based on one private conversation she and I had several years ago ["Cry, the Overcrowded Country: A Post-Earth Day Requiem," *The Social Contract,* Vol. IX, No. 4, Summer 1999]. Ms. Hull had identified herself as a member of FAIR's Advisory Council (on which I also serve) calling to get acquainted.

Since I am a national leader of the Sierra Club, quoting extensively from me in an article criticizing the organization [creates the impression] that I was the source for, or at least confirmed, the many incorrect statements about population, immigration, and the Sierra Club.

For example, the Club has never placed "blame for environmental degradation on U.S. patterns of consumption alone." The Sierra Club Board of Directors and all six activists who serve on the Population Committee support stabilizing — in fact, reducing — the population of the U.S. as well as that of the world. The Political Ecology Group was never "given the task" of promoting that the Sierra Club stay out of the immigration issue. They took it upon themselves to become involved, just as did outside organizations and individuals who supported the other alternative in that contentious 1998 Sierra Club debate. The article contains numerous other mistakes of detail and of broad picture.

Many of the comments attributed to me are not my words and are misleading. Things I told Ms. Hull in confidence are now in print. An offhand assessment I made of the prospect for immigration reform is now quoted as the conclusion of an article in *The Social Contract.*

Ms. Hull should be ashamed.

Sincerely,
JUDITH KUNOFSKY
Berkeley, California

Diana Hull responds:

EDITOR:

On August 20, 1997, I had a 40-minute telephone conversation with Judy Kunofsky. The purpose of my call was to ask why she thought environmental leaders would not focus on U.S. overpopulation, and would not work publicly for immigration reform. Who better to explore this issue with than an environmental leader who was also on the FAIR Advisory Board?

I thought Ms. Kunofsky's views were valuable and part of the historical record. She confirmed what has long been suspected — that Hispanic elected officials in Los Angeles had refused to cooperate with the Sierra Club on environmental issues, if the Sierra Club was involved in immigration reduction.

I am confused at Ms. Kunofsky's statement that the Sierra Club Board and Population Committee support reducing U.S. population. If so, how can they adopt a position of neutrality on immigration? Are they cowardly — or innumerate?

It cannot be said, as Ms. Kunofsky asserts, that the Political Ecology Group "took it upon themselves to become involved" in this issue. Santos Gomez and Cathi Tactiquin were appointed to the Sierra Club National Population Committee immediately after they joined the Club. Ms. Tactiquin is on the Advisory Board of the Political Ecology Group and also the Director of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. Mr. Gomez is on PEG's Organizing Board. PEG literature states that "the Sierra Club is a key battleground in the "Greening of Hate" and boasts that they "work closely with 'progressive' members of

Correction

With apologies to author John Cairns ["An Epic Struggle: Sustainability and the emergence of a new social contract," Volume IX, Number 4, Summer 1999] we note that in the chart on page 215, column 2, item 2 should read: "Frugal use of resources." And on page 216, column 2, line 8, the word "Easterners" should be "Westerners."

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the Sierra Club to resist a takeover by anti-immigration zealots." Those zealots are identified as the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), Negative Population growth (NPG), Population/Environment Balance (PEB), Carrying Capacity Network (CCN), and Californians for Population Stabilization (CAPS), ecologist Garrett Hardin, et al.

The mission of NNIRR is, in their words, "reframing the immigration debate." Signatories to the pro-immigration statement include Brian Andreja, Sierra Club, National Environment Justice Task Force, and Julie Beezley Sierra Club, Southern California Sierra Club Task Force.

Ms. Kunofsky was indeed the source of every comment I attribute to her in this article. I have a detailed record of what she said and every quote is an exact quote.

Ms. Kunofsky never said any of her statements were confidential although she is aware that I write on this subject. I regret that a cordial and informative discussion on issues I assumed were of mutual concern has resulted in controversy.

I stand by my conclusion that leaders of the Sierra Club, at the highest level, have been either seduced, intimidated, or both, by unscrupulous opponents of immigration reform.

Sincerely,
DIANA HULL
Santa Barbara, California

EDITOR:

Regarding Walter E. Williams' view that the "Population Bomb" was a Dud: [*The Social Contract*, Vol. IX, No. 4, Summer 1999] perhaps, Mr. Williams, you could consider Bangladesh. It has a population of 120 million and a per capita income at one percent of the American level. Of course, they would like to have America's standard of living. Suppose the task was to bring them up to our standard of living within 25 years. They would need a transportation system of highways, rail, and air. They would need hospitals, office buildings, streets, factories, energy production and distribution, schools and universities, communications systems, all on a scale equal to half the infrastructure of the United States, because they have half the population. Also, everyone would have to be brought up to our level of education, skills and training. This would be a daunting task even for a country with the financial muscle of the U.S.

Yet, if they could do it, they would have to start all over and do it again. That's because their population is doubling in 25 years. Then they would have to *double* their efforts and do it again for the next 25 years which will bring an additional 240 million. Thus, in 2050, Bangladesh will have 480 million people on land the size of Florida.

Mr. Williams, either Bangladesh has an overpopulation and a high fertility problem or it doesn't. Your remedy: "the most promising anti-poverty tool for poor people and poor countries is personal liberty" doesn't even work for those in poverty in America. A better anti-poverty tool is low fertility for poor people. Poverty would nearly vanish, if the poor stopped reproducing.

Mr. Williams asks: "suppose the rest of us don't feel like adopting a one-child policy, then what? The elite's answer will be to use brute government force, like China does..." Why pick on fertility? Brute government force is used to raise taxes, recruit juries, draft armies, clear houses out of the path of highways. China is attempting to avoid famine. What is the U.S. attempting to do when it jails marijuana smokers and prostitutes? Since all countries use "brute government force" it is clearly the ends and not the means that Williams objects to. Nevertheless, financial incentives for low fertility would be more appealing than coercion.

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The Bulletin Board

Immigration on the Internet

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT journal and THE SOCIAL CONTRACT PRESS are on the internet. Our address is: **www.tscpress.com**.

Our home page gives our mission statement, information about THE SOCIAL CONTRACT, editorials from several immediately previous issues which highlight the contents of each, and a list of books for sale.

Here are some other sites that readers may be interested in exploring. By listing them here The Social Contract does not imply an endorsement of all the material on any specific site.

- The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) works to reduce immigration numbers. Reach them at <fairus.org>.
- English Language Advocates is a national organization working to make English the official language of government: <elausa.org>.
- Information about Affirmative Action for Immigrants is shared by Jim Robb at <pw2.netcom.com/~jimrobb>.
- Carrying Capacity Network has a new website at <carryingcapacity.org>.
- Negative Population Growth has a new website at: <www.npg.org>.
- Philip Martin publishes *Migration News* and can be reached at <migration.ucdavis.edu>.
- Professor Norman Matloff has many articles and a great deal of data at:<heather.cs.ucdavis.edu/pub/Immigration/Index/html>.
- Joseph Daleiden heads the Midwest Coalition for Responsible Immigration. His web site is: <enteract.com/~mcri97>.
- The Sierra Club is at <sierraclub.org>.
- *People and Place* is a journal published by the Centre for Population and Urban Research at Monash University in Australia. They can be reached at <swin.edu.au/sbs/pub/pnp>.
- <canadafirst.net> includes much information and thoughtful views from the Canadian Immigration Reform Committee.
- Glenn Spencer leads Voices of Citizens Together at: <americanpatrol.com>.
- <cofcc.org> reaches the Council of Conservative Citizens.
- Columnist Samuel Francis now maintains a website at <www.samfrancis.net>.
- The Biocentric Institute website is prepared by Bill Dickinson at <ultralink/net/IAPM>.
- GRIP — Georgians for Responsible Immigration Policy: http://micromgt.home.mindspring.com/grip/.
- Aliens in IOWA! <fyiowa.com/aliens/alien005.htm>.
- PEG is the Political Ecology Group, founders of the "Immigration and Environment Campaign" — a pro-open borders initiative: <igc.org/peg>.
- *Mankind Quarterly, The Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies* — articles and reviews including population, immigration and public policy: <mankind.org>.
- The Aztlan Organization is at <aztlan.org>.
- <fedpub.com/immigration> brings up Federal Publications, Inc. which has a sub-heading for developments in immigration law.
- The American Immigration Lawyers Association is at <aila.org/home.htm>.
- <lrainc.com/swtaboo/> is based on Garrett Hardin's idea of "stalking the wild taboo."
- "Immigration by the Numbers" is Roy Beck's site at <numbersusa.com>.
- <amren.com> reaches American Renaissance.
- *Politically Incorrect — An On-line Magazine* is at <cyad.com/cvgibin/pinc/july97/index.html>

E-mail addresses for pertinent organizations:

- <center@cis.org> Center for Immigration Studies (CIS).
- <npg@npg.org> Negative Population Growth.
- <ccn@igc.apc.org> Carrying Capacity Network (CCN).
- <caps@calweb.com> Californians for Population Stabilization (CAPS).
- European American News can be reached at <ootrov@hotmail.com>.

TSC

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Effects of Immigration on the Labor Market

Effects may be more than reported by NRC

by Steven Camarota

Few government policies can have so profound an effect on a nation as immigration. Large numbers of immigrants and their descendants cannot help but have a significant impact on the cultural, political, and economic situation in their new country. Over the last 30 years socio-economic conditions, especially in the developing world, in conjunction with U.S. immigration policy have caused 20 million people to leave their homelands and emigrate legally to the United States. Additionally, the Immigration and Naturalization Service estimates that 420,000 new illegals settle permanently in the country each year. The current influx has caused an enormous growth in the immigrant population, from 9.6 million in 1970 (4.8% of the population) to 26.3 million (9.8% of the population) today.

As in the past, immigration has sparked an intense debate over the cost and benefits of allowing in such a large number of people. One of the central aspects of the immigration debate is its impact on American workers, especially those employed at the bottom of the labor market. These workers are thought to be especially vulnerable to immigrant competition because demand for this kind of labor is generally weak and immigrants are heavily concentrated in less-skilled and lower-paying jobs. While these workers have made some gains in the last few years, the real wages of workers at the bottom of the labor market are still below what they were in the 1970s.

***Steven Camarota** is resident scholar at the Center for Immigration Studies, Washington, DC. This testimony was given before the House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration, on March 11, 1999.*

The Impact on Less-skilled Natives

There are at least four reasons to be concerned about the impact of immigration on the wages of native workers.

First, because they often come from countries where wages are much lower, immigrants may be willing to work for less. If immigrants do underbid natives for jobs, then in order to remain competitive in the labor market, natives will have to reduce their own expectations for compensation.

Second, immigrants may be seen as more desirable workers by employers. If this is the case, natives will have to choose between offering their services for lower wages in order to remain competitive or suffer higher unemployment.

The third reason for concern is that employers can use the threat of further immigration as a way of holding down the wages and benefits of workers. The more open the immigration policy, the more credible the threat becomes.

The fourth and probably the most important reason to examine the impact of immigration on less-educated natives is that immigration increases the supply of labor. Basic economic theory predicts that the wages of those in competition with immigrants will decline as immigration increases the number of workers competing for jobs.

Turning to the first question, do immigrants work for less, especially those employed at the bottom of the labor market? For the most part, the research generally indicates that a few years after arrival, immigrant wages are very similar to those of natives in the same occupation with the same demographic characteristics. This may not be true in all places and at all times, but in general it seems that only newly arrived immigrants undercut native wages.

On the question of whether immigrants are seen

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as better employees, there is certainly a lot of anecdotal evidence and some systematic evidence that immigrants are seen as better workers by some employers, especially in comparison to native-born African Americans. It is certainly not uncommon to find small-business men and women who will admit that they prefer Hispanic or Asian immigrants over native-born blacks. This is especially true of Hispanic and Asian employers, who often prefer to hire from within their own communities. We would expect that this preference on the part of some employers to want immigrants will result in lower wages and higher unemployment for those natives who are seen as less desirable.

"...the threat of further immigration may also exert a significant downward pressure on wages."

A study of the Harlem labor market by Newman and Lennon (1995) provides some systematic evidence that employers prefer immigrants to native-born blacks. Their study found that although immigrants were only 11 percent of the job candidates in their sample, they represented 26.4 percent of those hired. Moreover, 41 percent of the immigrants in the sample were able to find employment within one year, in contrast to only 14 percent of native-born blacks. The authors conclude that immigrants fare better in the low-wage labor market because employers see immigrants as more desirable employees than native-born African-Americans. I have also found some evidence in my work that in comparison to whites, there is an added negative effect for being black and in competition with immigrants.

While no real research has been done on this question, the threat of further immigration may also exert a significant downward pressure on wages. To see how this might work consider the following example: Workers in a meat packing plant that has seen a sudden rise in the number of immigrant workers will very quickly become aware that their employer now has another pool of labor from which he can draw. Thus, even if immigrants remain a relatively small portion of the plant's total workforce, because of our relatively open immigration policy, the potential of further immigration exists. Therefore, a relatively open immigration policy may have an effect on wages beyond what might be expected simply by looking at the number of immigrants in the country at any one time.

The fourth reason for concern about the impact of immigration on the wages of natives is that it increases the supply of labor. Based on the March 1998 Current Population Survey there were about 16 million immigrants in the American workforce. However, they are not distributed evenly across occupations. In 1998, 31 percent of immigrants in the labor market had no high school education, and for those who entered in the preceding five years, 36 percent lacked a high school degree. In comparison, only 9 percent of natives in the work force did not have a high school education. Immigrants now comprise about 32 percent of the high school dropouts in the work force, while accounting for only 9 percent of workers with more than a high school education. If we look at occupations, we see the high concentration of immigrants at the bottom of the labor market. In 1998, immigrants made up only 9 percent of individuals in managerial and professional jobs; in comparison, they comprised 20 percent of workers in service jobs, such as janitor, security guard, and child care worker. This means immigration has increased the supply of the some kinds of workers much more than others. As a result, any effect on the wages or job opportunities of natives will likely fall on natives employed in less-skilled and low-paying occupations.

Empirical Research

Attempts to measure the actual labor market effects of recent immigration empirically have often come to contrary and conflicting conclusions. Studies done in the 1980s and early 1990s, which compared cities with different proportions of immigrants, generally found little effect from immigration (Butcher and Card, 1991; Altonji and Card, 1991; Borjas 1983, 1984). However, these studies have been widely criticized because they are based on the assumption that the labor market effects of immigration are confined to only those cities where

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immigrants reside.

The interconnected nature of the nation's economy makes comparison of this kind very difficult for several reasons. Research by University of Michigan demographer William Frey (1993, 1996) and others, indicates that native-born workers, especially those natives with few years of schooling, tend to migrate out of high-immigrant areas. The migration of natives out of high-immigrant areas spreads the labor market effects of immigration from these areas to the rest of the country. There is also evidence that as the level of immigration increases to a city, the in-migration of natives is reduced. In addition to internal migration patterns, the huge volume of goods and services exchanged between cities across the country creates pressure toward an equalization in the price of labor. For example, newly arrived immigrants who take jobs in manufacturing in a high-immigrant city such as Los Angeles come into direct and immediate competition with natives doing the same work in a low-immigrant city like Pittsburgh. The movement of capital seeking to take advantage of any immigrant-induced change in the local price of labor should also play a role in preserving wage equilibrium between cities. Beside the response of native workers and firms, immigrants themselves tend to migrate to those cities with higher wages. In short, the mobility of labor, goods, and capital as well as choices made by immigrants may diffuse the effect of immigration, making it very difficult to determine the impact of immigration by comparing cities.

One way researchers have attempted to deal with the problems associated with cross-city comparisons is to estimate the increase in the supply of labor in one skill category relative to another skill category brought about by immigration in the country as a whole. The wage consequences of immigration are then calculated based on an existing body of literature that has examined the wage effects of changes in the ratio of skilled to unskilled workers. The National Research Council (NRC) relied on this method in its 1997 report entitled *The New Americans* (Edmonston and Smith, 1997). The NRC estimates that immigration has had a significant negative effect only on the wages of high school dropouts. The NRC concluded that the wages of the this group, 11 million of whom are natives, are reduced by roughly five percent ($13 billion a year) as a consequence of immigration. Not a small effect. Dropouts make up a large share of the working poor. In 1998, nearly one out of three native workers living in poverty lacked a high school education. Additionally, 1.6 million native families or more than three million people living in poverty depended on the wages of a person who lacks a high school education for support. Put another way, the wage losses suffered by high school dropouts because of immigration are roughly equal to the combined federal expenditures on subsidized School Lunches, low-income energy assistance, and the Women Infants and Children program.

"...immigrants have a significant negative effect on the wages of natives employed in occupations performed by persons who have only a high school education or less."

My own research suggests that the effect of immigration may be even greater than the estimates in the NRC report (Camarota 1997, 1998). I compared differences across occupations nationally and found that the concentration of immigrants in an occupation does adversely affect the wages of natives in the same occupation. In other words, there is a negative relationship between the percentage of immigrants in an occupation and the wages of natives in the same occupation, even after controlling for a wide variety of factors. By treating the entire nation as one labor market and comparing the effects of immigration across occupations, this approach avoids many of the problems associated with cross-city comparison.

My results show that immigrants have a significant negative effect on the wages of natives employed in occupations performed by persons who have only a high school education or less. For the 23 percent of natives employed in these occupations (about 25 million workers), a 1.0 percent increase in the immigrant composition of their occupation reduces

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wages by 0.8 percent. Since these occupations are now on average 19 percent immigrant, my finding suggests that immigration may reduce the wages of workers in these occupation by more than 1 percent. It should also be added that since native-born blacks and Hispanics are 67 percent and 37 percent more likely respectively to be employed in the negatively affected occupations than are native-born whites, a much higher percentage of minorities are negatively affected by immigration. Moreover, because native-born blacks and Hispanics in these occupations earn on average 15 percent less than whites, the wage loss resulting from immigration is likely to represent a more significant reduction in the material prosperity for these groups.

Still other researchers have found that immigration adversely affects employment for natives. Augustine J. Kposowa (1995) found that a 1 percent increase in the immigrant composition of a metropolitan area increased unemployment among minorities by 0.13 percent. She concludes, "Non-whites appear to lose jobs to immigrants and their earnings are depressed by immigrants." In a report published by the Rand Corporation, Kevin McCarthy and Georges Vernez (1997) estimated that in California alone competition with immigrants for jobs was responsible for between 128,200 and 194,000 people being unemployed or having withdrawn from the workforce. Almost all of these individuals either are high school dropouts or have only a high school degree. Additionally, most are either women or minorities.

Policy Discussion

Knowing that low-skilled natives are made poorer by immigration does not tell us what, if anything, we should do about it. The extent to which we take action to deal with the wage and employment effects of immigration depends on how concerned we are about the wages of the less-educated. A number of scholars have argued that the inability of low-skilled workers to earn a living wage contributes significantly to such social problems as welfare dependency, family breakup, and crime. One need not accept all the arguments made in this regard to acknowledge that a significant reduction in wages for the poorest Americans is a cause for real concern.

If we wish to do something about the effects of immigration, there are two possible sets of policy options that could be pursued. The first set would involve leaving immigration policy in place and doing more to ameliorate the harmful effects of immigration on natives in low-skilled occupations. Let me bring up two of the most commonly discussed ways of increasing wages without cutting immigration. Since the research indicates that the negative impact from immigration falls on those employed at the bottom of the labor market, an increase in the minimum wage may be helpful in offsetting some of the effects of immigration. Economic research indicates that the minimum wage does increase the wages for those who already have jobs. However, research also indicates that by raising the cost of labor, the minimum wage can cause unemployment by increasing the incentive to lay off workers and by making employers less willing to hire new ones. The size of the dis-employment effect, however, is a matter of significant debate in the economic literature. In regard to immigration, it seems clear that increasing the minimum wage and at the same time allowing in large numbers of less-skilled immigrants can only aggravate whatever dis-employment effects exist. In contrast, cutting low- and unskilled immigration would increase wages, without there being any potential for increasing unemployment among those earning the minimum wage.

Another program that might be helpful in assisting those harmed by immigrant competition is the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). There is little doubt that the Credit increases the income of low-wage workers. However, in addition to the high cost to taxpayers, the Credit may also hold down wages because it acts as a subsidy to low-wage employers. That is, employers have less incentive to increase wages because workers are now being paid in part by the federal government. Cutting low- and unskilled immigration, on the other hand, has no such down side for less-skilled workers nor is it costly to taxpayers. Moreover, the Credit only increases earnings for those with jobs, it does not address increased unemployment among the less-skilled that comes with immigration. It is also worth remembering that dispersion of funds under the EITC is automatic. Since immigration lowers the wages for precisely

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those workers who already have low incomes, it is very likely that immigration increase the costs of the Credit to taxpayers. It is also possible that an increase in the Credit may only get incomes back to where they would have been had there been less immigration. Thus, to get the maximum benefit from an increase in the EITC it would be highly desirable to cut low- and unskilled immigration first and then increase the dollar value of the EITC. The resulting gains to low-wage workers are then more likely to amount to a significant improvement in the living standards of recipients.

"...a greater allocation of resources could be devoted to controlling illegal immigration..."

The second set of policy options that might be enacted to deal with this problem would involve changing immigration policy with the intent of reducing job competition for natives and immigrants already here. If we were to reduce unskilled immigration we might want to change the selection criteria to ensure that immigrants entering the country will not compete directly with the poorest and most vulnerable workers. At present, only about 12 percent of legal immigrants are admitted based on their skills or education. Since two-thirds of permanent residency visas are issued based on family relationships, reducing the flow of low-skilled legal immigrants would involve reducing the number of family-based visas. This might include eliminating the preferences now in the law for the siblings and adult children (over 21) of U.S. citizens and the adult children of legal permanent residents. These changes would not only reduce low-skilled legal immigration immediately, they would also limit the chain migration of low-skilled immigrants that occurs as the spouses of those admitted in the sibling and adult child categories petition to bring in their relatives. In addition to reducing the flow of low-skilled legal immigrants, a greater allocation of resources could be devoted to controlling illegal immigration, especially in the interior of the country. This type of enforcement has not seen the same recent increases as border control. Illegal aliens tend to be very low skilled, with an estimated 75 percent lacking even a high school degree.

Benefits of Immigration

Of course, it is important to realize that wage losses suffered by the unskilled do not vanish into thin air. Many advocates of mass immigration will concede, at least in private, that low- and unskilled immigration reduces wages. However, they will point out that lower wages for the less-educated results in higher profits, and also increases the wages of more-educated Americans who can now be paid more. In other words, while immigration may make the poor poorer, it also creates a small net economic benefit for the country as a whole. The NRC estimated that the gain resulting from the wage loses suffered by the unskilled is equal to about 1 or 2 tenths of one percent of our total economy — $1 to $10 billion. Thus, additional unskilled immigration can be justified on the ground that it creates a very small net benefit for the country as a whole, though it is bad for unskilled workers. The net gain is so small relative to the size of our economy because unskilled workers account for such a tiny proportion of the nation's total output. As a result, their wages can decline substantially without having a significant effect on the economy.

The Economic and Fiscal Paradox

There is a very high cost to cheap immigrant labor. The economic benefit from immigration comes from the fact that immigrants are significantly less skilled than natives. The resulting high concentration of immigrants at the bottom of the labor market is what causes the significant wage reductions that in turn generate the net gain for employers and others. But unskilled immigrants also have a negative effect on public coffers. In other words, it is precisely those workers who create the economic benefit who are responsible for the fiscal burden. In fact, the fiscal cost (tax payments minus service use) created by immigrant households was estimated by the National Research Council to be between $11 and $22 billion dollars a year at the current time. This fiscal cost is

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large enough to offset the modest economic gains that come from access to immigrant labor. The fiscal burden associated with immigrants is entirely the result of low- and unskilled immigrants. The National Research Council in 1997 found that during the course of his or her lifetime, the average immigrant without a high school degree will use $89,000 more in public services than he or she pays in taxes. For an immigrant with only a high school degree the figure is $31,000. They also found that immigrants with a college education tend to be a fiscal benefit — paying considerably more in taxes than they use in services. But, overall the fiscal effect is negative because so many immigrants are poor and uneducated. This means that when the fiscal effects of low-skilled immigrants are considered, immigration reduces the wages of the most vulnerable Americans and creates an added fiscal burden for American taxpayers. And this burden is large enough to offset any economic gain resulting from lower wages for the unskilled. In light of its impact on the poor and public coffers, it is therefore very hard to justify the continued mass migration of very low-skilled immigrants on the grounds that it is good for the country as a whole.

Conclusion

Of course, it is important to keep in mind that other factors in addition to immigration have had a negative impact on low-wage workers. Technological change and increased trade have also played a significant role in reducing labor market opportunities for low-wage workers in the Untied States. However, immigration is unlike technological change or globalization because it is a discretionary policy that can be altered to suit our needs and values. After all, Congress cannot legislate a pause in the expansion of human knowledge or stop the Japanese from setting up factories in Malaysia — but it can reduce unskilled immigration. And based on the latest research, we can do so secure in the knowledge that doing so will not harm to the U.S. economy. In fact, it would probably be good for the country as a whole.

In the end, arguments for or against immigration are as much political and moral as they are economic. If one is concerned about low-wage and less-skilled workers in the United States, then clearly our current policy is unwise. On the other hand, if one places a high priority on helping unskilled workers in other countries, then allowing in a large number of such workers makes sense. Of course, only an infinitesimal proportion of the world's poor could ever come to this country even under the most open immigration policy one might imagine. Those who support the current high level of unskilled immigration should at least do so with an understanding that it is likely to come at the expense of the most vulnerable and poorest workers in the United States. TSC

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Immigration Policy and the Plight of Unskilled Workers

by Vernon M. Briggs, Jr.

In one of his most memorable public addresses, President John F. Kennedy spoke to the 1962 Graduating Class at Yale University the following words:

> *For the great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie — deliberate, contrived, and dishonest — but the myth — persistent, persuasive and unrealistic. Too often we hold fast to the cliches of our forebears. We subject all facts to a prefabricated set of interpretations. We enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought.*

In no other area of public policy today are Kennedy's words more appropriate than as they relate to the subject of immigration and its impact on the U.S. economy. Immigration policy has been captured by special interests who peddle the notion that immigration is an unmitigated benefit to the nation and that it is costless. Nothing could be further from the truth. The immigration myth is based on the premise that attention need only be paid to the benefits while the costs can be totally ignored. Only with respect to the formulation of immigration policy is such nonsense tolerated as conventional wisdom.

If the scale of immigration was small — as it was from the 1930s through to the mid-1960s — the nation could live with the myth that immigration yields only benefits. But it is not small. In 1965, the foreign-born accounted for only 4.4 percent of the population — the lowest percentage since such data started being collected prior to the Civil War. The percentage had been falling for over 50 years. By 1997, however, the percentage had risen to 9.7 percent (plus some unknown additional increment of statistical undercount due to the estimated 6 million illegal immigrants currently in the country). Until there are legislative changes, the percentage will continue to rise. Thus, about one of every ten Americans in 1997 was foreign-born. In absolute terms, the foreign-born population grew from 8.6 million persons in 1965 to 25.8 million persons in 1997. In the process, immigration has again become a key feature of American life. Indeed, the U.S. Bureau of the Census has projected that immigration will be the most important factor influencing the growth of the American population over the next 50 years. Given its momentum, the welfare of the nation can ill-afford to live with the "unrealistic" immigration myth — no matter how "persistent" and "persuasive" are the voices of its proponents.

The Point of Focus

Although the subject of immigration involves multiple considerations, they all have one common juncture point: the labor market. It is a truism that immigrants must work or they must be supported by those who do. So no matter how many other issues are thrown into the immigration caldron, the critical issue is: what are the labor market consequences of what immigration policy produces or tolerates? For it must always be remembered that immigration is entirely a discretionary act. The mass immigration that the United States is currently experiencing is entirely a policy-driven phenomenon. No one has a right to immigrate or to seek refuge in the United States — legally or illegally. The "costs" of immigration need to be taken into account as much as do the "benefits" when it comes to designing the appropriate policy. The concerns of the "losers" are as relevant as those of

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the "winners." Such is especially the case when those most adversely impacted are the least advantaged persons in the population and labor market.

Labor Market Effects

Due to differences in the age and gender distribution of the foreign-born population from the native-born population, immigrants comprise a larger portion of the labor force than they do of the population as a whole. In 1997, foreign-born workers comprised 11.5 percent of the U.S. labor force (or almost one of every eight U.S. workers). In absolute numbers, 15.5 million workers were foreign-born. These are big numbers and, when concentrated in specific segments of the labor market, they have significant influences.

As in the past, post-1965 mass immigration is geographically concentrated. In 1997, five states (California, New York, Florida, Texas, and Illinois) accounted for 65 percent of the entire foreign-born population and 66 percent of the entire foreign-born labor force. The foreign-born are also overwhelmingly concentrated in only a handful of urban areas — especially in their central cities. These particular labor markets, however, are among the nation's largest in size: Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Miami, and Chicago. Collectively, these five cities accounted for 51 percent of all foreign-born workers. Although somewhat less numerous, immigrants also comprise significant percentages of the labor force of a number of other cities and increasingly in some rural towns.

The most significant labor market characteristic of the foreign-born labor work force, however, is the fact that it is disproportionately characterized by workers with low human capital endowments. The 1990 Census revealed that 25 percent of foreign-born adults who were 25 years and older had less than a ninth-grade education (compared with only 10 percent of native-born adults). Moreover, 42 percent of the foreign-born adult population did not have the equivalent of a high school diploma (compared to 23 percent of the native-born adult population). Thus, it is the low-skilled, low wage sector of the nation's major urban labor markets that are the most impacted by immigrant job-seekers. Not only do low-skilled immigrants compete with each other for whatever opportunities exist at the bottom of the nation's job hierarchy, but they also compete with the low-skilled native-born workers. Indeed, when the National Research Council (NRC) calculated in 1997 that immigration provides a net "benefit" to the U.S. economy of from $1 to 10 billion a year, the "benefit" was based largely on the result of the wage suppression of the wages of low-skilled workers whose wages are lower than they would have otherwise been. This, of course, is only a "benefit"

"The most significant labor market characteristic of the foreign-born labor work force, however, is the fact that it is disproportionately characterized by workers with low human capital endowments."

that an economist can appreciate. It is certainly no "benefit" to low-skilled workers who are already at the bottom of the nation's income distribution. It is an artificially imposed hardship imposed by government policy on native-born low-skilled workers. The only actual wage "benefit" in this process is received by the immigrant workers themselves who typically earn considerably more at the bottom of the U.S. wage scale than they would have earned in his/her homeland. Low-skilled native-born workers lose; low-skilled foreign-workers benefit. Whose interests are U.S. policymakers supposed to protect?

To make matters worse, the NRC report catalogued the steady decline of the educational attainment levels of post-1965 immigrants over the years. As a consequence of this prolonged decline in worker human capital, foreign-born workers earn on average less than native-born workers and the earnings gap between them has widened over the years. Immigrants from Latin America, who in 1997 accounted for over half of the entire foreign-born population of the nation, earn the lowest wages. The NRC, however, found no evidence of discriminatory wages being paid to immigrants. Rather, it states that immigrant workers are paid less than native-born

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workers because, in fact, they are far less skilled and more poorly educated. The relative decline in both skills and wages of the foreign-born population was attributed to the fact that most immigrants are coming from the poorer nations of the world, where average education, wages, and skill levels are far below those in the United States. As a direct consequence, post-1965 immigrants are disproportionately increasing the segment of the nation's labor supply that has the lowest human capital endowments. In the process, they are suppressing the wages of all workers in the lowest skill sector of the labor market.

While the low-skilled labor market is substantial in size — constituting perhaps as much as one-third of the U.S. labor force — it is confronted by the paradox that it is experiencing very little employment growth. Rather, employment growth is overwhelmingly occurring in the occupations in virtually all industries that have jobs with high skill and education requirements.

Thus, while the national unemployment rate has fallen to levels not seen since before 1970, unemployment rates for unskilled workers remain almost three times the national rate. Given the disproportionately low education levels of the adult foreign-born population, it is no surprise that the unemployment rate of the foreign-born exceeds that of the native-born by about 50 percent. To be specific, in 1997 (the last year for which all of the relevant data is presently available), the national unemployment rate was 4.9 percent but the unemployment rate for the foreign-born was 7.4 percent. The unemployment rate for foreign-born without a high school diploma was 9.8 percent and for the native-born it was 14.5 percent.

These figures should dispel the notion that there is a shortage of unskilled workers in the nation and they also vividly demonstrate that immigration's greatest impact on the labor market is in the least skilled segment of the labor force that is already having the greatest difficulty finding employment.

High unemployment, combined with the extensive differences in the human capital characteristics between the native-born and the foreign-born population, means there is also a significant variation in the incidence of poverty between the two groups. In 1997, 13.6 percent of the nation's total population were classified as living in poverty. For the foreign-born population, however, 20.9 percent were living under poverty conditions compared to 12.9 percent of the native-born population. Thus, it is not surprising that immigrant families rely more heavily on the use of both cash and non-cash welfare programs than do native-born families. This should be no surprise. If immigration policy is going to allow wages for low income workers to be suppressed, they will need to find additional income from the public sector to meet the disproportionately high costs of living that characterizes life in most large cities. Thus, when the NRC calculated the net fiscal costs of public services to immigrants (e.g., those associated with increased education, medical, welfare, incarceration, and public housing) beyond what they pay in taxes, it found the cost to taxpayers ranged from $14.8 to *$20.2* billion a year. Obviously, these fiscal costs are disproportionately distributed among the communities and states depending on the size of the foreign-born population in their respective jurisdictions. In California, for example, the NRC calculated that it costs every native-born household $1,178 a year in added taxes to cover the costs of government services provided to immigrants in the state in excess of the taxes the immigrants pay.

"While the national unemployment rate has fallen to levels not seen since before 1970, unemployment rates for unskilled workers remain almost three times the national rate."

Collectively, all of these concerns translate into the bigger societal issue of the effect on income inequality. It is the Achilles' heel of the nation's prosperity in the 1990s. In 1994, the President's Council of Economic Advisers formally acknowledged that "immigration has increased the relative supply of less-educated labor and appears to have contributed to the increasing inequality of

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income in the nation." Although their report claims that the aggregate effect is "small" on the national distribution of income, immigration is a major factor in the deterioration of wages and incomes for low-skilled workers and low income families. Indeed, in 1995 the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that immigration accounted for approximately 20 to 25 percent of the increase in the wage gap between low- and high-skilled workers during the 1980s in the 50 largest metropolitan areas of the United States. Likewise, the NRC study revealed that almost half of the decline in real wages for native-born high school dropouts from 1980-1994 can be attributed to the adverse competitive impact of unskilled foreign workers. Hence, just because the effects of immigration are dissipated when the perspective is at the national level does not mean that they are insignificant in those large local labor markets where mass immigration is a reality.

"Reforms must also include the reduction of the immigration admissions categories that are not specifically linked to the possession of human capital attributes needed by the labor market."

Lastly, there is the adverse effect of prevailing immigration policy on labor mobility — especially those workers with low skills. Research on this crucial issue has disclosed that the higher the concentration of immigrants in a local labor market, the less attractive is the locality to native-born workers. It has also revealed that foreign-born workers are less likely to move out of states where they are concentrated than are native-born workers. But, most importantly, unskilled native-born workers — those who are losing out in the competition for jobs with low-skilled immigrants — are more likely to leave their former communities to find jobs elsewhere.

What Should Be Done?

To mitigate the adverse impacts of immigration policy on the low-skilled labor market requires change in *all* components of the nation's immigration policy. It is *not* simply an issue of the adverse effects of continuing illegal immigration and the need to combat the ongoing hemorrhage of the nation's borders. Reforms must also include the reduction of the immigration admissions categories that are not specifically linked to the possession of human capital attributes needed by the labor market.

The starting point should be the enactment of the principal recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform (CIR): (1) the elimination of the extended family preferences for legal admission; (2) the elimination of the entry of "unskilled workers" under the employment-based immigration admission category; 3) the elimination of the "diversity immigration" category; (4) the inclusion of refugees within the total number of immigrants annually admitted each year; (5) the verification of social security numbers of all job hires; and (6) far more attention and resources given to interior enforcement at job sites of employer sanctions and other workplace labor standards.

I would add to this list: (1) the need to reject all proposals for non-immigrant labor programs involving unskilled labor in general and agricultural workers in particular; (2) the end of the practice of reducing fines on employers who are found to have violated the employer sanctions provisions of the law; (3) maximum publicity given to the names of employers who are found to be in violation of the employer sanctions provisions; (4) the creation of a reliable and verifiable identification system that includes a photograph and other personal identifiers (if I have to show a picture photo of myself from a state-issued document to board a plane to attend this hearing, why should I not have to do the same to be hired for a job?); (5) and the entire political asylum system that is being massively abused as a cover by human smugglers of illegal immigrants who become essentially "slave labor" for restaurants, garment manufacturers, hotels, adult entertainment, and other low wage enterprises needs to be carefully reviewed and extensively overhauled with emphasis given to

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expedited decision making and verification that persons who are denied asylum actually leave the country.

Concluding Comments

In assessing the political debacle of the immigration reform movement in the mid-1990s, political scientists James Gimpel and James Edwards wrote in 1998: "The voice of the people has had little impact on the tone or direction of the immigration debate in Washington." They point out that despite the extensive research findings that show the need for significant legislative changes and that public opinion polls consistently show that the citizenry want these changes to take place, it makes no difference to the professional politicians. The myth that immigration has only benefits is perpetuated by special interest groups who have no concern for the national interest. Immigration reform, however, is not going to go away. The issue continues to fester. For as George Borjas and Richard Freeman, the key authors of the labor market portion of the aforementioned NRC report, have written in response to the gross distortions of their work by the pro-immigration lobby and the media:

> *Immigration creates winners and losers. Low income workers and taxpayers in immigrant states lose; those who employ immigrants or use immigrant services win, as do the immigrants themselves. The critical issue is how much do we care about the well-being of immigrants compared with the Americans who win and the Americans who lose?*

Immigration policy is causing wage and income inequities and it is distorting the nation's labor market. Immigration is not a "free lunch." Neither is it fair. Its costs are disproportionately borne by the poor and the most vulnerable in the labor force. It is past time to rein-in this rogue instrument of public policy. TSC

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Immigration: Who Suffers?

An interview with Vernon M. Briggs, Jr.

by Claire Mencke

The percentage of the U.S. population that is foreign-born has more than doubled in the past 30 years, to 9.7 percent. The effect of immigration on the labor force is even larger: about one in eight U.S. workers was born abroad.

Most immigrants are not highly skilled or educated. One result: 20 percent of the foreign-born live in poverty, compared to the national average of 13.6 percent.

Investor's Business Daily spoke recently with immigration reform advocate Vernon Briggs of Cornell University's School of Labor and Industrial Relations on how U.S. policy has evolved — and how it may change.

IBD: *How is the latest wave of immigration different from earlier waves?*

VMB: The supply of immigrants is basically the same as always. But the demand has changed. At the turn of the century it was unskilled, poorly educated, non-English-speaking, *hard-working manual laborers. But that's what most of the jobs (called for).*

IBD: *How many now are admitted on the basis of needed skills?*

VMB: Of the 675,000 legal immigrants admitted each year, only 140,000 have needed skills. Even that overstates the number because it includes spouses and children. So it may be you're only getting 50,000 people admitted on skills and education.

IBD: *How large or small are the gains in the nation from immigration?*

VMB: There's no easy answer. You've got something that's in motion. The foreign-born population is increasing dramatically. The last estimate from 1997, the most recent, shows foreign-born at 11.5 percent of the labor force. That's nearly one of every eight workers.

IBD: *What worries you most about immigration policy?*

VMB: It's that so much of it is tied to people who have low levels of education, skills and training at a time when the labor market is indicating that's not what it needs. They either have to be given direct remedial services by special education and training programs, or they are going to compete in the labor market with large numbers of native people who are also still at the bottom of the income distribution.

IBD: *And the result?*

VMB: The Council of Economic Advisors has said immigration is leading to a widening of the income disparity within the country. The last census in 1990 showed that 42 percent of the foreign-born did not have a high school diploma.

IBD: *Who gains?*

VMB: Employers of cheap labor, and the immigrants, most of whom come from countries where wages are even worse than they are when they're at the bottom of the (U.S.) labor pile. Sometimes consumers win when they get cheaper prices. That's probably one reason why inflation is being hampered a bit in this day of tightening labor markets.

IBD: *Who loses?*

VMB: The poor, both native and foreign-born. Also taxpayers in states with high immigrant populations. In New York City close to 40 percent of the population now is estimated to be foreign-born. That's close to the highest percentage ever recorded. That's why unemployment in New York City is still close to 7 percent after seven years of prosperity.

IBD: *Do most people benefit or not from immigration?*

***Claire Mencke** is a staff writer with Investor's Business Daily. This interview appeared August 27, 1999 and is reprinted by permission.*

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VMB: It's increasingly the case that most people don't benefit. You have an immigration policy that dramatically increasing the cost of all kinds of services — education, incarceration, welfare. That means everybody's going to have to pay.

IBD: *How should immigration policy be changed?*

VMB: The first thing would be to make it flexible. It's now written that we will receive 675,000 legal immigrants every year. If next year the unemployment rate goes to 40 percent we still get 675,000. The Immigration Act of 1990 raised the legal immigration numbers by 35 percent. The year it went into effect, in 1991 we went into a recession. Then, we had 1.8 million immigrants receive green cards in that one year — the largest ever. Also in 1991, we had 1 million fewer people working at the end of that year than at the beginning. The numbers ought to be set administratively, as in Australia and Canada to be congruent with labor market needs — changing as economic conditions change.

IBD: *What else?*

VMB: I'd also like to see immigration shifting away from emphasis on family reunification. That's where 80 percent of visas go. I would do what the Jordan Commission recommended in 1997 — cut off extended family preferences. Also, I'd not admit any workers under employment-based categories for unskilled occupations. The unemployment rate for unskilled workers is still close to 9 percent, and it's much higher in urban areas.

IBD: *Most polls show people want less immigration. Why doesn't public policy reflect this?*

VMB: It's like gun control. Specific interests dominate policy formulation. Polls consistently favor immigration reform and a crackdown on illegal immigration, by substantial numbers. It's completely ignored. TSC

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American Workers Victimized by Immigration

Mainly in categories not related to labor needs

by Roy Beck

After some research and writing I did for the *Atlantic Monthly* on immigration in 1994, the distinguished publisher W .W. Norton & Co. asked me to write a book that focused on the effects of current high levels of immigration on America's workers.

My research for the book led me to emphasize the largely untold stories of the victimization of lower-skilled American workers. My testimony today is based on my reporting for that book.

Since 1970, more than 35 million foreign citizens and their descendants have been added to the local communities and labor pools of the United States.

That is the numerical equivalent of having relocated within our borders the entire present population of all Central American countries. The Census Bureau shows that if Congress does not reduce present immigration levels back toward traditional numbers, immigration will add the equivalent of yet another Central America to the United States in an even shorter time.

Demographic change on such a massive scale inevitably has created winners and losers among Americans.

To find the losers, study closely what has happened to wages and working conditions in dry-walling and a number of other construction trades, in the poultry industry, in janitorial and housekeeping occupations, in agricultural work and in any other occupation with heavy participation by foreign workers.

The meat-packing industry offers a vivid example of how losers are created. The industry today is dominated by immigrant workers. The tasks of disassembling America's hogs, sheep and cattle are nasty, tedious and risky. Most news stories I see about these industries state that these are jobs Americans won't do.

But until this recent renewal of mass immigration, those were jobs done almost entirely by native-born Americans. Until immigration levels began rapidly increasing in the late 1970s, they were jobs that Americans not only would do but formed lines to get hired to do.

Workers with few skills and little education could earn up to around $18 an hour in today's dollars. Strong unions guarded the health and safety of the workers.

People held on to their slaughterhouse jobs like gold. And they pulled strings to get their relatives and children into the plant. Because nearly all packing companies offered handsome pay and benefits, no company had trouble remaining profitable while treating its workers well.

But by the 1980s, the pool of foreign workers had grown so large that relatively new companies could use them to undercut the established unionized firms. The new corporations busted unions and slashed wages so that the old giants of the industry — Armour, Swift, Wilson and Cudahy — could not compete while honoring their contracts to provide safe, middle-class jobs to their workers. All four eventually got out of the slaughterhouse business.

Jobs have so deteriorated that it is difficult to keep workers — whether native-born Americans or immigrants. Stress-related disorders and injuries drive

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***Roy Beck** is Washington Editor of* The Social Contract *and director of NumbersUSA. This testimony was given before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims on March 11, 1999.*

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many workers off the jobs within months. During the 1990s, annual turnover rates of 50 to 100 percent have been common. Meatcutters now are injured 400 percent more often than workers in the average U.S. industry. In terms of injuries, meatpacking in the 1990s had become the most dangerous industry in America.

The industry does not have to worry too much about the turnover, though, because the federal immigration program each year brings in new foreign workers to fill the vacant slots.

A small army of scholars has written that the meatcutter occupation has deteriorated back toward the level described by Upton Sinclair in his famous exposé, *The Jungle* (1906).

A historical search finds that Sinclair's book led to major reforms to improve the product safety of the industry, but not the worker safety. Continued flows of high immigration during that time allowed industries to keep pay and working conditions deplorable. The meatcutter jobs improved substantially only after Congress in the 1920s greatly reduced the numerical level of immigration of low-skilled immigrants. It was during the next 40 years of below-average immigration that the meatcutters' jobs turned into one of the best middle-class, low-skill occupations in the country.

It is important to note that the recent deterioration of the meatcutter occupation occurred at the same time as revolutionary changes in the industry.

The upstart corporations in the 1960s and 1970s gained larger shares of the meatpacking business:

- by shipping boxed beef instead of hanging carcasses,
- by eliminating highly paid butchers in the middle,
- by building new and more efficient plants while locating more of them near the rural areas where livestock raising was concentrated.

While all of that created human and economic dislocations, it was fully in line with the workings of a free market system in which entrepreneurs constantly search for cheaper methods of production and distribution to enable them to increase their sales while improving prices and quality for the consumer.

If it had stopped there, the workforce would have been reduced by about a third but there still would have been 130,000 meatcutters earning great middle-class incomes.

Instead, we ended up with 130,000 low-wage and dangerous jobs.

"I have talked with many American workers whose financial and personal lives still have not recovered from their losses."

The changes in production and distribution should not have caused wage cuts. In fact, they improved the productivity of the workers. But instead of sharing in the fruits of that productivity, workers saw their wages fall precipitously because of the availability of foreign labor.

In many situations like that of Storm Lake, Iowa, the entire American-born workforce at a slaughter-house was laid off as a plant was taken over by a new corporation which hired primarily foreign workers, sometimes at around half the wages of the people they replaced. I have talked with many American workers whose financial and personal lives still have not recovered from their losses.

In many other situations, plants were shut down in urban areas and replaced with rural plants, especially in Kansas and Nebraska. Apologists for the importation of foreign labor often say it is necessary because those rural areas did not have a sufficient laborforce to supply the new plants. But if the federal government had not provided a foreign laborforce, the corporations would have had to provide incentives for the American meatcutters laid off in Kansas City, Chicago, Omaha and other cities to move to the new locations. Remember that the number of meatcutter jobs did not grow but was drastically reduced. There was no national shortage of meatcutters.

The victimization of the American laborforce is not over. Every year, these quadrupled levels of immigration are undermining new legions of American workers.

In many cases, the victims — like those in the 1970s and 1980s meatpacking industry — are

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American-born workers. But disproportionately the victims are earlier immigrants who cannot pull themselves out of the working poor because of each year's fresh new supply of foreign workers.

The foreign-born workers in the meatpacking industry today would be chief beneficiaries of reductions in immigration — just as the immigrant meatcutters in the 1920s rose to the middle class after cuts in immigration.

It was sincere concern for the worker victimization wrought by too-high immigration that led the late Barbara Jordan and her bi-partisan Commission on Immigration Reform to recommend numerical cuts in immigration.

The recommended cuts were in categories in which immigrants are allowed into this country without any regard to their skills and or to whether their entrance into the U.S. laborforce would be positive or negative for those already in it.

For the sake of America's lower-skilled workers — both native and foreign-born — the commission recommended ending the chain migration of extended families and the visa lottery. It also called for eliminating the corruption of the refugee program in which nearly half the people admitted do not meet any standard definition of refugee.

I salute this committee for turning its attention to the plight of America's lower-skilled workers. My personal recommendation is that you work in a bi-partisan fashion to show these workers the kind of respect and relief they deserve. I can think of no better start than to pass a bill ending chain migration. TSC

Did the Clinton 'Rising Tide' Raise All Boats?

by L. Randall Wray

My prepared statement, co-authored with my colleague Mark-André Pigeon, is an examination of the impact that the current expansion has had on job opportunities. In particular we question whether the "rising tide" has lifted all boats. The overall picture is one of falling unemployment rates and rising employment rates in the 1990s. This seems to be consistent with the view that labor markets are tight. However, employment gains have not been evenly shared. Only 700,000 of the almost 12 million new jobs created during the Clinton expansion went to the half of the population aged 25 and over that has not attended college. The putatively tight labor market has not succeeded in creating significant numbers of jobs for those with no college education.

It is true that among those aged 25 and over, unemployment rates have fallen and employment rates have risen most for those on the lower half of the education ladder. However, these numbers do not tell the whole story. First, the gaps between those with a college degree and high school dropouts are huge, especially for employment rates (an average of 79 percent and 37 percent, respectively, for the period 1992 to mid-1998).

Second, the gains may be temporary as the trend toward rising employment rates and falling unemployment rates for lower-skilled workers can be expected to be reversed as soon as the economy slows, with the "last hired" being the "first fired."

Finally, and more importantly, closer analysis of the data reveals that all of the "improvement" in the

L. Randall Wray, Ph.D., *is a senior scholar at the Levy Institute. His current research is in the areas of full employment policy, monetary and fiscal policy, and monetary theory. This executive summary introduces his testimony before the House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims, March 11, 1999. The full text can be retrieved from the internet at http://www.house.gov/judiciary/106-333.htm.*

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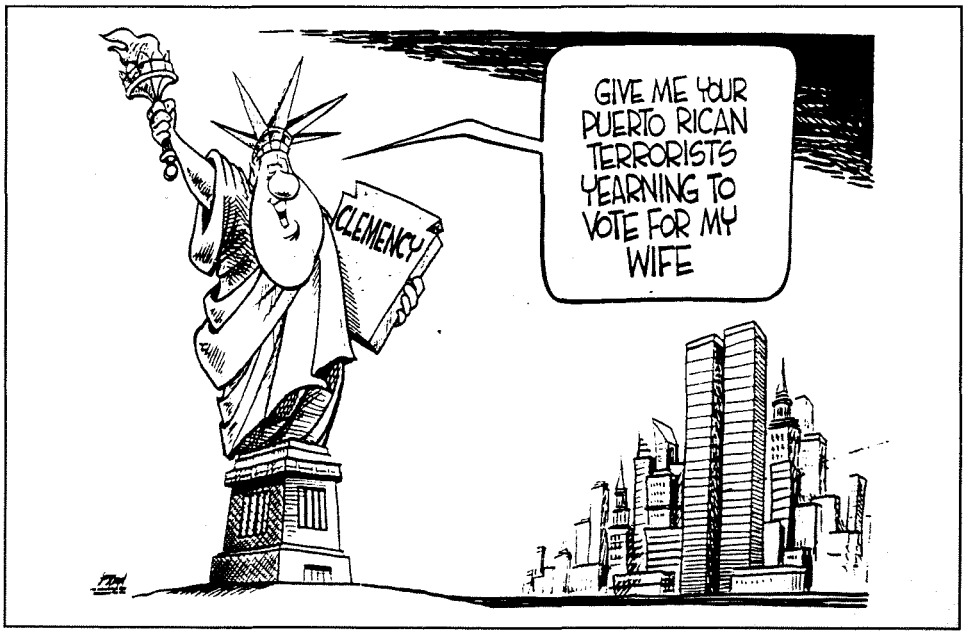
official numbers can be explained by a decline in the population of those who have not attended college — not by an increase in their employment levels. Indeed, we found that high school dropouts actually lost 95,000 jobs over the expansion. Job creation during the Clinton expansion was only barely enough to keep pace with the increase in the number of new college-educated workers entering the labor force.

The crucial problem for the less-educated is that most simply fall out of the labor force. Two-thirds of the more than 56 million noninstitutionalized adults aged 25 and over who are out of the labor force have no college education. Admittedly, many do not wish to work. However, it is useful to calculate how many of those currently outside the labor force might constitute a potential source of labor supply. By assuming that people with less education could have participation rates comparable to those with a college degree, we estimated that there were 26.3 million potentially employable persons aged 25 and over in 1998. If we take out those 65 and over, we estimate there are still about 15 million potentially employable persons aged 25 to 64.

Clearly, economic expansion alone is not enough to help the less-educated, which is why we propose a job opportunity program to provide a job to anyone ready, willing, and able to work. These jobs would pay the minimum wage plus health care and child care benefits. Administration and supervision would be decentralized, with participating employers setting reasonable performance standards that would have to be met by program employees. The federal government would require a significant training component for all these jobs in order to prepare participants for eventual private-sector employment. Because of the increased productivity of the "buffer stock" of labor, and because private sector employers could recruit from among those employed in the program, we expect a well-designed job opportunity program to lead to greater price stability than under the current system, which relies on unemployment to reduce inflation pressures.

The Clinton expansion was not sufficiently robust to increase job opportunities for the less-educated. Active labor market policies are required to increase their experience and training so that when private sector demand is high enough, there is an alternative to bidding up the wages of college-educated workers. The job opportunity program can offer full employment and greater price stability, while simultaneously lifting the boats of those left behind by robust economic expansions. TSC



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Community Costs of Low-Skilled Immigrants

The local effect of federal policies

by Georges Vernez

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the impact of immigration on low-skill American workers and on American communities.

To understand the effects of immigration on low-skill workers in the United States, it is necessary to understand the diverging dynamics of immigration on the one hand and the economy on the other hand.

As you know, the share of immigrants entering the country with fewer than 12 years of education (i.e., less than a high school degree) has increased steadily since the 1970s. Whereas 15 percent of new immigrants came in with this level of education in the 1970s, so far more than one-third have done so in the 1990s. These immigrants are even more concentrated in a few states than are immigrants as a whole. For instance, 38 percent of low-skill immigrants in the country today reside in California, compared to 32 percent of all immigrants. About 40 percent of California's immigrants have fewer than 12 years of education. In Texas, this share exceeds 50 percent. Other states with relatively high shares of low-skill immigrants include Illinois (32 percent), Florida (27 percent), and New York (26 percent).

As the share of new immigrants with a low level of education has increased, the number of jobs available to them and to their native-born counterparts has declined steadily. In 1970, 31 million jobs were filled by workers with fewer than 12 years of education, compared to today's 19 million, a 40 percent decline. In the 1990s, the economy has added 12 million jobs, but only 4 percent of these were filled by workers with fewer than 12 years of education. The bulk of the net new jobs created by the economy, 70 percent, were filled by workers with at least some college education. This shift in the demand for education by employers is characteristic of all industries, including those viewed as low-skill, such as hotels and motels, restaurants, and textile and apparel. One outcome of this trend has been a sharp increase in the relative return to education.

Our own studies, which focused primarily on California, and those of other researchers suggest that this pattern of immigration in the context of the changing U.S. economy has contributed to:

- reduce job opportunities for native-born low-skill workers
- lower wages for all low-skill workers
- an increase in income disparities
- a lack of economic progress for low-skill immigrants
- a disproportionate fiscal burden for a few communities.

Although the remainder of this testimony elaborates on these effects on low-skill workers and the communities in which they are located, we do not wish to imply that these are the only effects of immigration. It has been well documented that (1) employers benefit from migration in the form of lower costs for labor, (2) jobs have been retained in industries that might otherwise have had to downsize or move offshore, and (3) all consumers benefit from lower prices for goods and services. And, of course, the immigrants themselves enjoy a well-being and hope for their future (and that of their children) that

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Georges Vernez, Ph.D., *is director of the Center for Research on Immigration Policy at the Rand Corporation. This was his testimony before the House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims, March 11, 1999.*

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would not have been possible in their home countries.

Let's first consider how immigration has affected workers in California. It has contributed most to lowering the job opportunities of native-born high school dropouts and somewhat less to lowering those of native-born high school graduates. Overall, the employment rate of native-born men decreased from 67 percent in 1970 to 47 percent in 1990 for high school dropouts and from 86 to 76 percent for high school graduates. We estimate that immigration contributed in the range of 7 (low boundary) to 25 percent (high boundary) to that decline. This effect was larger for African American men and lower for Hispanic and non-Hispanic white men. The employment rate of native-born men with at least some college remained constant.

In contrast to the employment rates for men, those of native-born women increased over this same period, although by much less for low-educated than for college-educated women. From 1970 to 1990, the employment rate of high school dropouts increased from 33 to 35 percent, while the rate of high school graduates increased from 48 to 59 percent. We estimate that without immigration, the growth in employment rate of these native-born women would have been 20 to 30 percent higher. The employment rate of women with at least some college was not affected by immigration; their rate of employment increased from 53 to 72 percent from 1970 to 1990.

Overall, we estimate that by 1990, from 130,000 to 190,000 persons had dropped out of the labor force or were unemployed because of low-skill immigration in California. This figure represents about 3 to 5 percent of all those unemployed or out of the labor force.

Immigration into California also affected the earnings of low-skill native-born workers in the 1970s, doing so more for African and Hispanic Americans than for non-Hispanic white Americans. For instance, we estimate that the earnings of African American males without a high school diploma would have been 10 to 16 percent — or $45 to $76 per week — higher had there been no immigration. Earnings of non-Hispanic white males would have been 4 to 8 percent — or $22 to $45 per week — higher. This negative effect, however, did not carry through into the 1980s, and neither decade saw an adverse effect on the earnings of males who attended some college. The pattern for women was similar, though the adverse effect in the 1970s seemed to apply only to native-born women who did not finish high school.

You will note that the effects of immigration on job opportunities and on earnings of workers have varied over time. During the 1970s, earnings of both men and women were most affected, while employment rates saw relatively minor effects. During the 1980s, the reverse took place: employment opportunities were affected most, and earnings saw no effects at all. One potential explanation for this variation over time in the tradeoff between jobs and earnings is that job growth was much higher (30 percent) during the 1970s than during the 1980s. The greater job opportunities of the 1970s seemingly induced people to enter the labor force at higher rates than they would have otherwise. In this context of high employment growth, immigration may not have so much increased competition for jobs as exercised a brake on the growth of wages. By contrast, during the slower employment growth of the 1980s, immigration had its largest impact on job opportunities.

"Overall, we estimate that by 1990, from 130,000 to 190,000 persons had dropped out of the labor force or were unemployed because of low-skill immigration in California."

Immigration has also contributed to the well-documented increase of inequality in earnings among workers and in income distribution among families. From 1960 to 1990, the increase in earnings disparity was more than twice as large for workers in California than for workers in the rest of the nation (45 versus 20 percent). In 1960, California enjoyed a lower earnings disparity among its workers than did the rest of the nation, but this pattern was reversed by 1980, and the gap has increased since then.

According to a recent study by Deborah Reed of

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the Public Policy Institute of California, about half of the disproportionate rise in earnings inequality in California can be explained by two factors. She estimates that one of these factors, the known increase in earnings for the college educated, explains about 30 percent of the rise in earnings inequality between 1967 and 1997. The other factor, the disproportionately large share of low-skill immigration into California, explains another 24 percent.

"[Another] effect of low-skill immigration that I want to highlight today is the disproportionate fiscal impact it is having on the communities and jurisdictions where low-skill immigrants are highly concentrated."

Immigrant workers, too, have been affected by the pattern of low-skill immigration over the past 30 years or so. Two effects are key. First, the real earnings of immigrants with 12 or fewer years of education have declined even more rapidly than those of their native-born counterparts. For instance, while the real earnings of native-born men declined by 24 percent between 1970 and 1990, those of foreign-born men declined by 29 percent. Over time, the gap in earnings between immigrants who lack any college education and native-borns with the same level of education has become progressively larger.

Second, low-skill immigrants not only receive lower earnings relative to native-born workers when they arrive, they also experience flat or decreasing earnings after age 30, losing grounds to native-borns as they age. The lack of economic mobility for these immigrants contrasts with the relatively high mobility of immigrants with at least some college education. These more-educated immigrants see their earnings increase fairly rapidly relative to those of native-borns, and within ten years of entry into the country, they earn as much as or more than native-borns do. This differential pattern of economic mobility associated with different levels of education applies equally to immigrant women and immigrant men. Earnings for an increasing number of young low-skill immigrants can thus be expected to remain low throughout their lifetime. In turn, these immigrants can be expected to have a long-term upward effect on the demand for public services and a downward effect on their children's educational attainment.

The last effect of low-skill immigration that I want to highlight today is the disproportionate fiscal impact it is having on the communities and jurisdictions where low-skill immigrants are highly concentrated. More than half of low-skill immigrants reside in just five of the largest metropolitan areas in the country: Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco/Oakland, Miami, and Chicago. And within these areas, low-skill immigrants are even further concentrated within a few jurisdictions. Because these immigrants are associated with lower income and larger families, their public fiscal impact varies significantly across states, and across local jurisdictions within states. The National Research Council estimates that in California, where 38 percent of the nation's low-skill immigrants reside, the annual tax burden per native-born household was $ 1,170 in 1996. By contrast, the estimate for New Jersey, where proportionately fewer immigrants have located and fewer of them are low-skill, the tax burden to the state and local governments as a whole was $226, nearly five times lower.

Of all public community institutions, the schools are the most impacted by the uneven distribution of immigrants. Whereas the nation's schools will have to accommodate up to 15 percent more students over the next 15 years or so, those schools in states having high immigrant concentrations, such as California, will have to accommodate an even larger growth-- 30 to 40 percent--in their student population. This growth in demand for education will eventually carry over to the nation's post-secondary education institutions.

A growing share of the increase in school- and college-age students will come from the children of immigrants. We project that in California, about 40 percent of the high school graduation class of 2010 will be children (more than two-thirds of whom were

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born in the United States) of immigrant parents. Educating these children for the information-based economy presents an added challenge. Currently, these children of low-educated, low-income immigrants are about 15 percent less likely to graduate from high school, 30 percent less likely to go on to college, and three times less likely to graduate from college than are children of more highly educated, higher-income parents. If these children are to compete in the U.S. economy and command adequate wages, their college-going and college-completion rates must increase significantly. To encourage them to go on to college, however, will require that the capacity of the nation's post-secondary institutions increase by an even greater increment: according to our estimates, by as much as an additional 12 percent nationwide and 30 percent in California. TSC

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Culture, Poverty and Immigration

America's immigration policy, which has facilitated substantial inflows of people with little education and few skills, particularly from Latin America, has aggravated the poverty problem. The creativity and diligence of East Asian immigrants, and their rapid assimilation, are clearly a national asset. But with 30 percent of Hispanics below the poverty line, it can be argued that we have imported a poverty problem as well as a cultural problem.

Moreover, the unskilled immigrants accept lower salaries and fewer benefits, and they place downward pressure on wages at the lower end that makes it more difficult for poor citizens to escape poverty. The late Barbara Jordan, who chaired the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, was particularly concerned about this problem; her commission recommended lower levels of legal immigration, redoubled efforts to stem illegal immigration, and more emphasis on skills in deciding who gets to immigrate.

Dallas Morning News columnist Richard Estrada worries that the high immigration volume impedes acculturation to the American mainstream. Multiculturalism — the rejection of mainstream Western culture and the assumption that all cultures are equal — also poses an obstacle to assimilation, to say nothing of its erosive effect on national unity.

The course of human progress demonstrates that some cultures produce greater good for greater numbers than others. Both at home and in the Third World, the anti-poverty agenda must address values and attitudes, as difficult and as painful as it may be. The process will be slow, but it offers hope that the War on Poverty can, in due course, be won.

— Lawrence E. Harrison
portion of an op-ed in
The Wall Street Journal,
July 13, 1999

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Assimilation or Colonization?

Book Review by Kevin Lamb

As the ranks of America's foreign-born population continue to swell into the next millennium, the debate over modifying U.S. immigration policy is likely to intensify. Uninterrupted, this demographic transformation foreshadows enormous cultural and societal consequences, yet the implications of this population shift remain detached from the policy elite. Immigration reform is one of the most neglected issues in the current presidential campaign even though the effects of immigration ricochet politically at the state, local and national level.

Consider the political pressures of ethnic constituencies. As the leading presidential candidates aggressively court the Hispanic vote in critical states like Texas and California, as well as the Cuban American vote in politically pivotal Florida, the outcome of future elections may hinge on the efficacy of immigrant nationalities as an ethnic voting-bloc. Some web sites provide candidates' position papers in Spanish. Moreover, political analysts regard President Clinton's recent unadvised grant of clemency to imprisoned Puerto Rican FALN terrorists as a calculated effort to sway Puerto Rican voters in the First Lady's all but certain 2000 bid for the vacant New York Senate seat. In political terms, contemporary immigration trends will merely solidify the political significance of ethnic voting-blocs. The Balkanization of increasingly diverse nations will allow culturally *unassimilable* groups to exert greater political leverage — not on behalf of the national interest — but to enhance their own cultural prominence.

Heaven's Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy
by George J. Borjas
Princeton University Press
263 pages, $27.95

The debate surrounding immigration issues is likely to become more pronounced given the latest census figures on the Hispanic and Asian population surge during the 1990s. As more suburban communities begin to resemble Guadalajara or San Juan rather than Topeka or Des Moines, further socio-economic and cultural dislocation could galvanize public support for immigration reform. Since economic factors spur much of the concern over immigration, the work of Harvard University scholar George Borjas brings common sense and realistic sobriety to this passionately argued topic. His latest book, *Heaven's Door*, offers reasonable proposals for amending current immigration policies. In building upon a body of solid research as a distinguished scholar, Borjas recommends two equitably broad reforms: implementing new standards for U.S. citizenship and reducing the current annual level of legal immigration by fifty percent.

Crucial to any immigration reform is the establishment of both *qualitative* and *quantitative* citizenship requirements. Since the 1960s, legislative initiatives have neglected to implement and enforce standards that would safeguard the interests of native-born citizens. Borjas makes a convincing case for establishing both *quantitative* and *qualitative* reforms. In his view, the primary aim of immigration reform should sustain the economic, cultural and social bonds of the native-born populace. Put simply, the national interest should set the parameters for U.S. immigration policy — one that fortifies American prosperity.

***Kevin Lamb** is a library assistant for* Newsweek *magazine. He is a frequent contributor to* The Social Contract.

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Along the way, Borjas punctures a number of myths promulgated by advocates of unrestricted immigration. Several crucial questions feature prominently in Borjas's analysis: How many immigrants should the United States accept every year? Should legal immigration be restricted by skill-level? Is national origin a legitimate criteria for selecting immigrants? What is the impact of immigration for national prosperity? Is the unrestricted annual flow of skilled immigrants economically beneficial for the future prosperity of the United States? Are most immigrants assimilating into the majority culture or merely expanding the realm of ethnic ghettoes? Are immigrants more likely to end up on welfare in comparison to native Americans? Should corporate interests, driven by access to unskilled labor, determine national economic policies? What is the most effective way of curtailing the flow of illegal immigration? In lucid prose, Borjas separates fact from fiction on these and other pressing aspects of the immigration debate.

"The claim that further immigration can only enhance a growing economy disregards evidence to the contrary."

Particularly revealing is the author's candid reflection on growing up through adolescence in Castro's Cuba and emigrating from Havana to Miami in 1962. Although his father passed away a few years before he and his mother left their native land, Borjas remembers the stark contrast between Havana and Miami. "Although it is less than two hundred miles from Havana to Miami, it immediately struck me — in those first few minutes — that the two places were quite different. Whereas Cuba was a dark, moody, and frightening place, Miami was bright and bold. Havana was dead, nothing was possible because the prison walls surrounded everything and everyone. Miami was alive!" As Borjas points out, his own rags to riches journey — earning his way out of the depths of poverty after arriving penniless — differs considerably from the *average* experience of many poor immigrants who discover that America's streets are not paved with gold. A couple of years ago, Borjas revisited his former Miami neighborhood. Despite the fact that very little had changed in this impoverished community, Borjas noticed that a *different* set of immigrants — Haitian refugees — had occupied the same "two-story apartment building" where Borjas once lived. This slum looked essentially as it did when he left years ago: indigent and immigrant .

Much of the economic impact of immigration is distributional in nature. High immigration levels may benefit the agricultural sector of the economy that utilizes low-skilled laborers, but this beneficial arrangement can end up costing society in terms of higher taxes for public services. Borjas carefully explains the economic costs and benefits from absorbing skilled versus unskilled immigrants. The claim that further immigration can *only* enhance a growing economy disregards evidence to the contrary: wage differentials between average personal incomes of native and immigrant workers, differential levels of welfare dependency, language barriers, skill level, educational background, family size, differential fertility rates between domestic and immigrant households as well as other economic variables. While local farmers may benefit from the labor of unskilled migrant workers, the neighboring community may be saddled with higher infrastructure costs in meeting the demands of community growth — additional schools for children, transportation costs or 'sprawl' and 'crawl,' social service expenditures, housing, sewer and water maintenance — what Borjas refers to as economic "externalities."

Contrary to conservative and liberal immigration proponents, Borjas shows that the total "annual net gain is a modest *one-tenth of a percent* of gross domestic product," which amounts to a financial gain of less than $30 per person. In California, studies show that current immigration levels cost the typical native household an additional $1,200 per year. Moreover, relatively high immigration levels suppress the wages of domestic workers in highly competitive fields. Public assistance is considerably greater among immigrant than domestic households. The percentage

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of native welfare recipients is 15.4% to 22.4% of immigrant recipients. Borjas documents with compelling data that economic prosperity is not undermined by reductions in immigration levels.

Advocates of unrestricted immigration passionately believe that American society can never be *too diverse*; hence, an ethnically Balkanized 'melting pot' isn't considered an oxymoron. Recently, Frank Sharry, Executive Director of the National Immigration Forum, argued in a letter to the *Washington Post* that "contemporary immigrant families" assimilate as well as other "newcomers" in "embracing the cultural norms that are part of life in the United States."[1] Using four standards to substantiate his claims, Sharry noted that: (1) 76.3 percent of immigrants speak English proficiently within 10 years of their arrival; (2) 76.4 percent of immigrants who resided 40 years in the U.S. were naturalized; (3) 60.9 percent of immigrants own their homes within 20 years of arrival; (4) Foreign born Asians and Hispanics have higher rates of intermarriage than the native-born black and white population. Such trends, according to Sharry, demonstrate that present immigration levels merely serve the national interest.

While these individual claims maybe factually correct, collectively they give a misleading impression of the socio-economic plight of *recent* immigrants. The selective nature of Sharry's argument omits critical truths about the *assimilation* process and *immigrant poverty rates*. A recent analysis by the Center for Immigration Studies points out that: (1) the gap between native and immigrant poverty levels tripled in less than two decades between 1979 and 1997; (2) one in five individuals living in poverty resided in an immigrant household; (3) 75 percent of the total increase in the size of the poor since 1989 stems directly from the growth of immigrant-related poverty; (4) levels of education, higher unemployment and larger family size contribute to relatively higher immigrant poverty rates.[2]

Sharry fails to substantiate his general point about cultural assimilation for the simple reason that *measurable gaps*, which involve a multitude of social, economic and cultural factors, distinguish the foreign from native-born population. As William Graham Sumner pointed out in *Folkways*, "the only way in which, in the course of time, remnants of foreign groups are apparently absorbed and the group becomes homogeneous, is that the foreign element dies out."[3] Yet when viewed through the lens of multiculturalism, assimilation simply means *accommodating* immigrant cultures at the expense of native-born Americans. As the nation's population becomes increasingly diverse, lacking the common bonds of a homogeneous national culture, the American 'melting pot' begins to resemble a 'Balkanized caldron'. For instance, English is now optional at ATM banking machines in major metropolitan areas with sizable immigrant populations.

Egalitarian politicians and political activists will never fail to exploit this differential gap for political gain, particularly when economic inequality lingers between immigrant and native. No matter how much assimilation occurs between ethnically diverse populations, further cultural, economic and social partitioning is likely to split along ethnic lines. As long as humanity remains divided ethnically, egalitarian politicians will exploit this division under the rubric of economic and social justice. Borjas takes up the question of national origins and makes a compelling argument for the right of a nation's citizenry to determine its own national fate.

One proposal that Borjas endorses for immigrant selection is a modified version of the Canadian point system. Citizenship requirements would be *meritoriously* conferred on applicants who *qualify* for legal residency in the U.S. Qualifications would be similar to the present Canadian model in that candidates for citizenship would be scrutinized in terms of national priorities. Hence, points are allocated collectively (from, say, arbitrarily 1-100) over several categories: skill level, educational background, age, no criminal record, national origin, language proficiency, family size, previous employment record, etc. Architects, engineers, chemists, and neurosurgeons seeking citizenship would receive more overall points than, for example, migrant farm workers, domestics, or gas station attendants. The allocation of points would be linked to workforce demand and the granting of citizenship would become a *privilege* not a patrimonial rite of passage.

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To some extent the national criteria for screening and selecting recent newcomers reflects an earlier period in this century. The 1924 immigration act implemented new standards for citizenship which emphasized IQ level and mental hygiene. A major concern then was the *qualitative* traits of the foreign-born, primarily because successful assimilation into American society hinged on a settler's adaptability to societal challenges; overcoming barriers of language, tradition, habits and social mores of the national culture. During this earlier period, officials from the Public Health Service relied upon the input of pioneering psychologist Henry Herbert Goddard in the clinical use of recently developed IQ tests to screen out *more efficiently* the 'feeble-minded' from the new arrivals passing through Ellis Island. Complicating matters around the turn of the century was the unprecedented influx of European immigrants, many of whom left undesirable conditions in disease-ridden areas. Public health officials were concerned about the effectiveness of regulating and monitoring their health conditions since it was not uncommon for a staff of twelve doctors to handle a case load of nearly 5,000 immigrants per day. The use of IQ tests by Goddard and his staff assisted public health officials to screen the mentally impaired more effectively, alleviating the concern about time constraints in the screening process.[4]

Many of the contested aspects of the immigration debate ultimately boil down to the assimilation of ethnic cultures. On this question Borjas admits that there really is no objective criteria for excluding some while admitting others. By the same token, he argues forcefully that matters of fairness in regard to this selection process should be determined first and foremost by those most affected by it. It is fitting to recall what the eminent sociologist Henry Pratt Fairchild once described as the "indispensable nation:"

> *The true nation is one of the finest products of cultural evolution. In it, the distinctively human traits find their fullest and most unhampered development. In the perfection and diversity of particular nationalities lies much of the richness of human life and experience. Those who long for world fellowship and a common brotherhood of humanity may easily find themselves visualizing this goal in terms of an essential uniformity of habits, customs, standards, conventions, traditions, institutions, and mores in general for all the members of the human species, so that basic groups would practically disappear. This is in many ways an alluring vision, but it is also a misleading one if conceived of as a possibility in any immediate future. If world peace had to wait for the achievement of such an ideal, we should certainly be doomed to an infinitely extended period of inconceivable chaos while some unpredictable forces were working toward that end.*[5]

Like Fairchild, Goddard, and other scholars of an earlier generation, Borjas recognizes the importance of numerical limits and selection criteria in deciding which applicants the U.S. should admit as legal residents. He makes an important point of noting that a diverse pool of skilled immigrants is preferable to the prevailing influx of unskilled immigrants who share common ties of national origin. Numbers matter, and as Borjas reminds us, nothing is more important for national posterity than the civic responsibility of preserving a nation's cultural heritage. TSC

NOTES

[1] Sharry, Frank, "Letters to the Editor" *The Washington Post*, September 13, 1999, p.A26.

[2] Camarota, Steven A., *Importing Poverty,* Center For Immigration Studies, September 1999.

[3] Sumner, William Graham, *Folkways: A study of the sociological importance of usages, manners, customs, mores & morals,* Ginn & Co. 1907.

[4] Zenderland, Leila, *Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of American Intelligence Testing,* Cambridge University Press 1998, pp.263-281. Zenderland's detailed account of Goddard's role in testing immigrants during the early part of this century offers a more balanced and objective profile of Goddard's work than the more subjective and critical accounts typical of the popular literature. Zenderland shreds the more critical interpretations of Goddard's work which has received unwarranted scorn over a distinguished record of public service.

[5] Fairchild, Henry Pratt, *Race and Nationality as Factors in American Life,* Ronald Press Co., NY, 1947 p.197.

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A Voice From the Past

How has labor leadership felt about immigration?

[This is the text of a letter from Samuel Gompers, president of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, dated April 28, 1921, and addressed to J. H. Reiter at Havorford College, about Congressional legislation to restrict immigration. A copy of portions of the letter appears below. The correspondence is from the archives of H. Keith Thompson for the Thompson Collection in the Hoover Institution.]

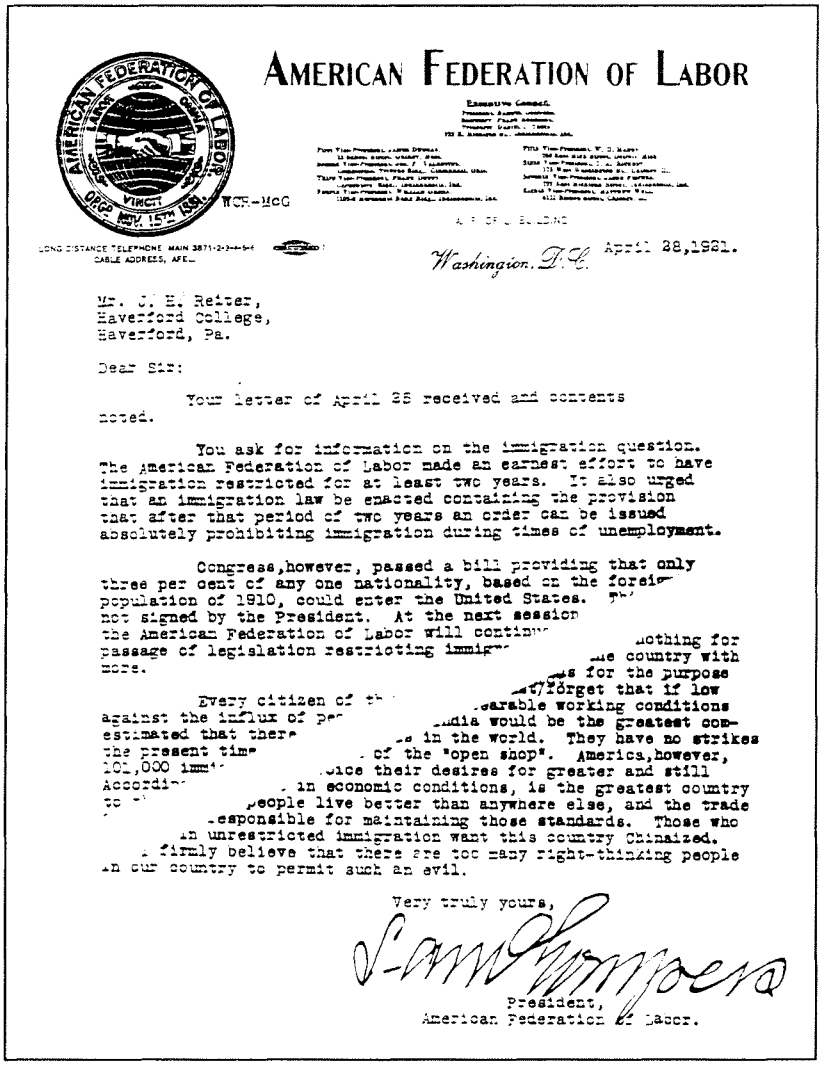
Dear Sir:

Your letter of April 25 received and contents noted.

You ask for information on the immigration question. The American Federation of Labor made an earnest effort to have immigration restricted for at least two years. It also urged that an immigration law be enacted containing the provision that after that period of two years an order can be issued absolutely prohibiting immigration during times of unemployment.

Congress, however, passed a bill providing that only three percent of any one nationality, based on the foreign population of 1910, could enter the United States. This was not signed by the President. At the next session of Congress the American Federation of Labor will continue to urge the passage of legislation restricting immigration for two years or more.

Every citizen of the United States should make protest against the influx of people from other countries. It is estimated that there are 5,000,000 unemployed in the country at the present time with the number increasing rapidly. In October 101,000 immigrants arrived in this country; in November, 103,000. According to steamship men 10,000,000 people could be brought into this country in the next ten months if ships were available. This estimate is based on applications for passage already received. So many have moved from Belgium and Germany to Holland that tens of thousands of



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WCR-McG

Washington, D. C. April 28,1921.

Mr. J. H. Reiter,
Haverford College,
Haverford, Pa.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of April 25 received and contents noted.

You ask for information on the immigration question. The American Federation of Labor made an earnest effort to have immigration restricted for at least two years. It also urged that an immigration law be enacted containing the provision that after that period of two years an order can be issued absolutely prohibiting immigration during times of unemployment.

Congress,however, passed a bill providing that only three per cent of any one nationality, based on the foreign population of 1910, could enter the United States. This was not signed by the President. At the next session the American Federation of Labor will continue nothing for passage of legislation restricting immigration for the country with more. for the purpose

Every citizen of the forget that if low against the influx of people would be the greatest competitor estimated that there in the world. They have no strikes the present time of the "open shop". America,however, 101,000 immigrants voice their desires for greater and still According to economic conditions, is the greatest country to people live better than anywhere else, and the trade responsible for maintaining those standards. Those who an unrestricted immigration want this country Chinaized. I firmly believe that there are too many right-thinking people in our country to permit such an evil.

Very truly yours,

Samuel Gompers

President,
American Federation of Labor.

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Hollanders have been forced to leave their country for the United States. When peace is declared between the United States and Austria, floods of residents of these countries will come to America. You can then very well understand that the United States is deeply interested in immigration.

"Shutting out from our shores the poor of other nations and races is caused by the law of necessity and self-protection consequent upon our industrial system."

So many immigrants coming into this country will break down the standard of living of our people. In 1905 when efforts were made in Congress to open the doors to Oriental immigration the American Federation of Labor declared:

> *We make no pretense that the exclusion of Chinese can be defended upon a high ideal, ethical ground, but we insist that it is our essential duty to maintain and preserve our physical condition and standard of life and civilization, and thus to assure us the opportunity for the development of our intellectual and moral character. Self-preservation has always been regarded as the first law of nature. It is a principle and a necessity from which we ought not and must not depart.*

Shutting out from our shores the poor of other nations and races is caused by the law of necessity and self-protection consequent upon our industrial system. Labor does not desire to erect a wall around our country and prevent the poor of other nations from entering. It does declare that America is for Americans alone, but it does insist that there should be and must be some restriction of immigration that will prevent disintegration of American economic standards.

Those who favor unrestricted immigration care nothing for the people. They are simply desirous of flooding the country with unskilled as well as skilled labor of other lands for the purpose of breaking down American standards. You must not forget that if low wages, long hours of employment and unbearable working conditions are signs of prosperity China and India would be the greatest commercial and industrial countries in the world. They have no strikes in China. It is the Utopia of the "open Shop." America, however, where men are free to voice their desires for greater and still greater advancement in economic conditions, is the greatest country on earth. Its people live better than anywhere else, and the trade unions are responsible for maintaining those standards. Those who believe in unrestricted immigration want this country Chinaized. But I firmly believe there are too many right-thinking people in our country to permit such an evil.

Very truly yours,
(s) Samuel Gompers
President,
American Federation of Labor

* * *

[*Contrast this letter from 1921 with the news that in Los Angeles on November 9, 1999 the AFL-CIO Convention agenda will include:*]

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION RESOLUTION

At the convention a vote will be taken which will allow all workers, regardless of immigration status, to:

Have the right to form unions, file complaints against illegal and unfair treatment without fear of reprisal, receive unemployment insurance, disability insurance, workers' compensation benefits and all the same remedies under the law as all other workers.

And,

Opposes all cooperation between the Immigration and Naturalization Service and other government and public institutions, such as the Social Security Administration, the Department of Labor, Unemployment and Welfare offices, and Motor Vehicle departments.

And,

Calls for a new amnesty program, and an inexpensive and expedited citizenship process.

And,

Proposes that the budget for immigration enforcement be cut and used to increase workers' rights and fair labor standards. TSC

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Six Billion and Still Counting

The tragically ignored milestones

by William B. Dickinson

Overpopulation of Earth is a tragedy unfolding in slow motion. Babies, after all, are born one at a time in all corners of nations large and small. We can barely comprehend that the natural increase totals 212,000 souls a day, 6.5 million a month, 77.7 million a year. And the magic of compound interest works in human as well as financial affairs.

An opportunity to revisit the population issue comes on Oct. 12 when, according to the United Nations, humanity will reach the 6 billion mark. This may be confusing to those who recall that the U.S. Census Bureau's world population clock hit 6 billion at 7:24 p.m. CDT on July 18. No matter. Both estimates are similar enough to deserve our attention. But the Census Bureau's milestone passed with little notice, and the United Nations estimate also is likely to get short shrift with the public and media.

The birth of the planet's 6 billionth current inhabitant also marks another first: World population has doubled in less than 40 years. And exponential growth is adding 1 billion people every 12 to 14 years. Ninety percent of this growth is in the developing world. The consequences are grave. Environmental destruction escalates as more people compete for water, land, clean air, food, fuel and amenities. Civil conflicts and ethnic wars roil societies as Balkanized peoples attempt to gain advantage through resource grabs at the expense of neighbors. Millions of the dispossessed are forced to migrate, straining the resources and goodwill of richer nations.

The disconnect between such disasters and population awareness is most obvious in media coverage. In May 1998, slash-and-burn fires swept Mexico and Central America, creating clouds of smoke that drifted as far north as North Dakota and as far east as Florida for almost a month. A study of 349 news articles by Michael Maher of the University of Louisiana, Lafayette, concluded that reporters framed the event chiefly in terms of human health, safety and convenience. Only three percent of the news framed the fires in terms of global biodiversity loss. And only 1 percent of the total coverage mentioned population growth in the region as a cause of the fires. Mexico's population, approaching 100 million, has nearly quadrupled in the last 50 years.

"Scientists looked up and saw irrefutable evidence of a well-established, long-documented trend of global deforestation and tropical species loss, a trend driven chiefly by human population growth," Maher writes. "Journalists looked up at the smoke and saw — smoke. They saw anything but a population-driven Sixth Extinction. Journalists gave more salience to connecting the smoke to *pet health* than to population growth. Americans are portrayed as either prudently saying indoors or bravely continuing to entertain themselves despite the irritating smoke."

Five of the 349 stories examined by Maher mentioned human population growth as a cause of the fires. All references to population were brief and buried in the bottom third of the story. Of the five, the most complete explanation of the population/deforestation connection was four sentences long. These appeared in paragraphs 41 and 42 of the story.

William B. Dickinson *has served as manager of the Washington Post Writers Group and currently holds the Manship Chair in mass communications at Louisiana State University. He continues to be associated with the Biocentric Institute at Airlie, Virginia, for which this essay was written. It is reprinted by permission.*

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Why did so much smoke get in the journalists' eyes and cause them to overlook the root cause of the 1998 fires?

One reason is that population growth appears beyond the capacity of humankind to control. Indeed, population momentum almost guarantees that world population will reach 9 billion by 2050. It takes about 70 years for the population to stabilize after a nation reaches a replacement-level fertility rate of 2.1 births per woman. Worse, the articles appearing about population have a new theme: not to worry; in the next century the world is in for some rapid downsizing. An example is an article by Max Singer, "The Population Surprise," in *The Atlantic Monthly* (August).

"Fifty years from now the world's population will be declining, with no end in sight," Singer writes. "Unless people's values change greatly, several centuries from now there could be fewer people living in the entire world than live in the United States today... The evidence now indicates that within 50 years or so world population will peak at about 8 billion before starting a fairly rapid decline." Singer slides over the problem associated with at least 2 billion more people in the next half-century, as well as the fact that his estimate is 1 billion short of that projected by other demographers. We are supposed to stop worrying and love the population bomb because it will be defused somewhere down the road. He makes an astounding leap of faith to predict that world population growth will head into negative numbers as modernity spreads to the less developed world.

I will not be present in 2050 to see if projections of a world of 9 billion people come to pass or, if they do, whether humankind's general condition is better or worse. I will never know whether the worst predictions about the greenhouse effect on ice-cap melt and weather prove to be true. Nor can I ever expect to learn how rich nations coped with a flood of political and economic refugees from the Malthusian misery engulfing poor nations.

But as a 68-year-old college teacher, I am only too aware that the fresh-faced students in my class will be among those who will see the scenarios played out in the first half of the new century. As is true of each generation, they are the ones-who-will-be-left. Will they care and, even if they do, will they have the time and conviction necessary to the task? I fall back on a speech made 31 years ago by C.P. Snow, the British physicist and philosopher: "One hears young people asking for a cause. The cause is here. It is the biggest single cause in history, simply because history has never presented us with such a danger. It is a very difficult cause to fight, because it will be long-drawn out... It is the duty of all the generations which are

"We are supposed to stop worrying and start loving the population bomb because it will be defused somewhere down the road... an astounding leap of faith to predict that world population growth will head into negative numbers as modernity spreads to the less developed world."

going to live in what is now the future, to keep before the world its long-term fate. Peace. Food. No more people than the earth can take. That is the cause."

Snow's emphasis on young people remains relevant. Anyone traveling around the world today encounters a sea of young men and women, the spawn of the post-World War II generation encouraged (sometimes coerced) to multiply and populate the earth. Even in the industrial nations of Western Europe, youth unemployment is a grave social irritant. In the poorer nations of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, fundamentalist revolutions and unrest find their acolytes among jobless young males. Birthrates may well be falling, but geometric imperatives guarantee the escalation of population nearly everywhere, if not through natural increase then through immigration. When the U.N. population clock hits 6 billion, it will be a cause not for celebration but for contemplation. TSC

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Sierra Club's Tunnel Vision

by Dan Walters

The Sierra Club has singled out states for praise and criticism for their handling of sprawling residential and commercial development and California received just mediocre ratings while Oregon, Vermont and Maryland were cited as exemplars of good planning and open space protection.

The report was another example of the Sierra Club's tunnel-visioned — and more than slightly hypocritical — attitude toward growth-related issues.

The club's current dogma says that states, cities and counties should be establishing urban development boundaries and forcing development to remain within them, while protecting open space lands beyond the lines. But in its state-by-state grading on land use controls, transportation and other subjects, the Sierra Club completely ignored the powerful underlying factor: population growth.

Praising such states as Oregon, Vermont and Maryland is akin to complimenting the sun for rising each morning. These states are experiencing relatively little population growth and therefore do not have the relentless demand for housing, retail services and transportation facilities that high-growth states — such as California — must confront.

Oregon added about 400,000 people to its population between 1990 and 1998, says the Census Bureau, an average of 50,000 a year. Population growth in Vermont and Maryland is even scantier, according to the Census Bureau, about 3,000 a year in the former and about 40,000 a year in the latter. California's population, however, grows by 40,000 each month, driven by foreign immigration (300,000 a year) and a very high birthrate (500,000-plus babies per year).

The Sierra Club ignores those inconvenient facts, implying that development is unrelated to population growth and/or that population pressures on all states are equal and policy differences are purely political. At the same time, the Sierra Club has absolutely refused, despite intense internal debates, to even address the role of immigration in population growth. Why? Because talking about immigration's impacts would put the club in political conflict with Latino rights groups.

The hypocrisy doesn't stop there, however. While the Sierra Club promotes denser "infill" development of existing urban areas, it is endorsing ballot measures in Contra Costa and Alameda counties that would effectively block denser housing in four already developed suburbs — Pleasanton, Livermore, Danville and San Ramon — which are close to mass transit. The measures, if enacted, would require any housing developments of more than token size to be approved by voters, not merely local officials.

Given the high demand for housing in the San Francisco Bay Area — resulting from underlying population growth and a vibrant regional economy — if those communities shut their doors, the only alternative would be to develop more farmland to the east.

"We're trying to create denser development, yet these initiatives will serve to push 30,000 people further out," says Bruce Kern of the Oakland-based Economic Development Alliance for Business. "That's not consistent with what environmentalists or public policy makers would like to achieve."

Affluent suburban communities don't want more high-density apartments and condominium units filled with less affluent, blue-collar workers, which is why the ballot measures are being promoted. The Sierra Club, whose members tend to be white, upper-middle class homeowners themselves, endorses the exclusionary, raise-the-drawbridge mentality implied in the "growth control" ballot measures — and then criticizes development on the urban fringes.

What's wrong with this picture? TSC

Dan Walters *writes for* The Sacramento Bee *in California.*

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Liberal Nightmare Washes up on Canada's Shores

An old book offers insight into a new problem

by Ian Hunter

As I write, three boatloads of illegal alien refugees are ashore on Canada's West Coast — the latest unmarked ship carrying human cargo arriving yesterday. The people aboard have been shepherded ashore, put up in gymnasiums, fed, and in due course released into Charterland where none can be deported without a right of appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. Of course, such appeals take years, by which time most will have disappeared.

But it is not what passes for Canada's immigration laws that I lament here; no doubt Canada is the laughing stock of the world and no doubt many nice Canadians prefer it that way instead oif appearing other than nice. Rather, this human tragedy interests me because it recalls to mind a brilliant and prophetic book I read (with great difficulty, as I shall explain) exactly 20 years ago. The book, called *The Camp of the Saints*, and its author, Jean Raspail, won the French Prix Goncourt.

Let me begin at the beginning. Prior to 1970, Jean Raspail had written a travel book, a book of short stories and two unmemorable novels. When *The Camp of the Saints* appeared in France it touched off a storm of controversy. Germaine Bree said it was "...the Brave New World of the Seventies"; Jean Anouilh called it "...a haunting book of irresistible force and calm logic"; but, in hindsight, it was Max Lerner who hit closest when he wrote: "A stream of violent controversy will swirl around this book, since it takes on a whole cluster of polemical issues — overpopulation, race, the Third World and the character of liberal thought and sentiment. Jean Raspail doesn't speak for me, especially since I don't share his views on race and don't believe the Apocalypse is here. But I am glad he has grappled with the issues and given me several nights of absorbed reading."

The Camp of the Saints envisages a future when racial violence has become a way of life in American cities, when upwards of a million black and brown Commonwealth citizens demand the right to emigrate to England and when millions of unarmed Chinese begin to filter across the border that divides them from Russia. But the real focus is on the Indian sub-continent where hundreds of thousands of hungry men, women and children, with nothing to lose but their lives, swarm aboard ships in the harbor of Calcutta.

As the refugee fleet sets out, leaving a wake of corpses from those pressed over the sides by the sheer crush of numbers, another ship behind the first and another behind it, it begins to dawn on the leadership of the affluent West that the flotsam and jetsam of humanity are on the move; in search of food and opportunity, and they are actually coming here. As the Last Chance Armada arrives closer, liberal bromides are no longer a substitute for action. But what action? The title of the book, incidentally, derives from the Book of the Apocalypse: "And they gathered together for the battle — the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the

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***Ian Hunter** is professor emeritus in the Faculty of Law at the University of Western Ontario.*
This commentary appeared in the National Post (Toronto) on September 2, 1999 and is reprinted with permission.
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Earth, and encompassed the camp of the saints and the beloved city." (Revelation, Ch. 20)

In November, 1975, the reputable U.S. publishing house Charles Scribner's Sons brought out an English translation. The first reviews I saw (in *National Review* and *The Alternative*) hailed the book as a major literary event, a haunting, prophetic visaion of the future. But then Paul Gray in *TIME* magazine started a chorus of condemnation of the novel as "racist." Mr. Gray wrote: "Before the book is called 'courageous' or 'provocative,' a small distinction should be made. The portrait of racial enmity is one matter. The exacerbation of it is quite another."

From then on, strange things began to happen. I searched bookstores in London and Toronto, but could never find a copy. One usually reliable bookseller order me a copy, but it never turned up. In London, England, I tried Foyles, which then laid claim to being the world's largest bookstore. Yes, they knew of *The Camp of the Saints*. No, they did not have a copy. No, they could not order a copy. No, they could not explain why. The same experience was repeated at London's two other pre-eminent bookstores, Dillon's and Hatchard's.

Public libraries were equally unavailing. I checked with John Wiley, Scribner's Canadian distributor: No, there were no copies in Canada. No, there had not been a paperback edition. No, I could not order a copy. Finally, a journalist, now dead, to whom I related my search, came up with a review copy that he passed on to me in a brown, unmarked envelope.

"The crux of the novel is the French government's response. What can they do? Are the boatloads of suffering humanity to be considered as enemies or refugees? Can a Western government committed to decades of human rights rhetoric formulate any effective response?"

Mr. Raspail imagined the vanguard of the refugee armada making for France. The crux of the novel is the French government's response. What can they do? Are the boatloads of suffering humanity to be considered as enemies or refugees? Can a Western government committed to decades of human rights rhetoric formulate any effective response? Mr. Raspail doubts it. Instead the government sets up inter-ministerial committees, issues ponderous communiques and broadcasts bulletins to its citizens in bureaucratese that serve to anaesthetize the population ("Government sources note with dismay the mass exodus of population and appeal for calm in the face of unforeseen developments..." and so on). Civilization ending not with a bang, but a whimper.

Whether or not the book is racist (the subtitle is "A chilling novel about the end of the white world") I do not presume to say. That it was deliberately suppressed, I cannot prove. I understand the book may now be available from Internet booksellers.

What I can say is *The Camp of the Saints* portrays events that begin almost as tectonic movements in regions and countries far away, then hit home with an impact like a force of nature, an earthquake, say, or a tidal wave. An impersonal tragedy that wears a human face. Above all the book is a biting, cruelly funny portrait of the liberal mind all adither when forced to confront reality. It is as harrowing and unforgettable a book as I have read. And it seems to be coming to pass on the nightly news.

Recent events entitle Jean Raspail to say, with Kipling, "I saw the sunset ere most men saw the dawn." TSC

[The Camp of the Saints *is published by The Social Contract Press and can be ordered by calling 1-800-352-4843.*]

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Immigration: Threatening the Bonds of Our Union reviewed by James P. Lubinskas

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The Stories We Tell

Television and Humanitarian Aid

by Michael Ignatieff

There are strict limits to human empathy. We make some people's troubles our business while we ignore the troubles of others. We are more likely to care about kin than about strangers, to feel closest to those connected to us by bonds of history, tradition, creed, ethnicity, and race. Indeed, because moral impingement is always a burden, we may use these differences as an excuse to avoid or evade obligation.

It is disagreeable to admit that instincts play a relatively small role in our moral reactions. We would prefer to suppose that the mere sight of suffering victims on television would be enough to rouse us to pity. In fact, there is nothing instinctive about the emotions stirred in us by television pictures of atrocity or suffering. Our pity is structured by history and culture.

> The numbers of people who care about foreign issues will always be much smaller than for domestic ones, but their influence is all out of proportion to their numbers.

The idea, for example, that we owe an obligation to all human beings by simple virtue of the fact that they are human is a modern conception. We still encounter tribal cultures in the world in which such an idea seems nonsensical. Universality comes late in the moral history of humankind, once Judeo-Christian monotheism and natural law have done their work. Even when these traditions have established themselves, people go on finding ingenious ways to evade their implications.

When we do make the misfortunes, miseries, or injustices suffered by others into our business, some narrative is telling us why these strangers and their problems matter to us. These narratives — political, historical, ethical — turn strangers into neighbors, aliens into kin. They also suggest some idea of reciprocal obligation: if we do not help them, these stories imply, they will not help us when our turn with adversity comes around.

Storytelling gives us pleasure, and the pleasures of moral stories are just as suspect as or at least as complex as the pleasures of, say, a dirty joke. Our moral stories usually tell us what we want to hear: that we are decent folk trying to do our best and that we can make good the harms of the world. We would hardly tell these stories if they did not make us feel better, and they make us feel better even when they make us feel guilty, because guilt endows us with capacity — it suggests that we have the power to make a difference and are failing to do so. The truth might be grimmer, after all: that we have less power than we suppose; far from being able to save others, we may be barely able to save ourselves.

Thus, if moral activity always involves the imagination, it is as much about imagining "us" as it is about imagining "them"; the stories we create always place us as their chief subject, and to the degree that this is so, our imagination is always susceptible to moral narcissism. The stories we tell lead us to think better of ourselves than we deserve.

Beside moral stories linking us and them, there are metastories governing the larger relationship

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Michael Ignatieff *is a historian and author. His most recent book is* The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience *which is reviewed elsewhere in this journal.* *This essay, reprinted by permission, is a chapter from the book* Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention *edited by Jonathan Moore and published by Rowman & Littlefield under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross.*

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between zones of safety and zones of danger. In the nineteenth century there were the stories of empire: the nexus of interest, economic, geopolitical, religious, and ideological, which bound the metropolis to the periphery. The imperial narrative — bringing civilization to the world of savagery — gave the media a metanarrative, a grand story into which each local event could be fitted and given its meaning.[1]

With the passage of the nineteenth-century empires and the creation of the postwar Soviet and American hegemony, the story that linked the two zones was the superpower rivalry for power and influence. What brought television to the war zones of these areas was the prospect of witnessing the proxy wars in which the world balance of power would be shifted. Now the superpower rivalry is over; "we" are no longer there, because "they" are no longer there, either. The proxy wars are no longer fed from Washington and Moscow, and while they continue — as in Angola — their salience and interest to the developed world has diminished. As for the parallel narrative of decolonization, some ex-colonies have made a successful transition to genuine independence and some degree of economic development, whereas others have foundered into tribalism, oligarchy, or civil war. Either way, there is no simple narrative to tell anymore. Instead, the narrative that has become most pervasive and persuasive has been the "chaos narrative," the widely held belief, only reinforced by the end of direct colonialism, that large sections of the globe, especially in Central Africa and the fiery southern edges of the former Soviet empire, have collapsed into a meaningless disorder, upon which no coherent pattern can be discerned.[2] The "chaos narrative" demotivates: it is an antinarrative, a story that claims there is no story to tell and therefore no reason to get involved. Since the end of the Cold War, television has simply reproduced the chaos narrative. As it does so, it undermines even its own limited engagement in zones of danger.

"Liberals were interested in Africa and Asia because the narrative of colonial nations achieving freedom after years of struggle seemed to confirm the liberal story of progress."

These demotivating elements are reinforced by the collapse of two other narratives. In the first of these, liberals were interested in Africa and Asia because the narrative of colonial nations achieving freedom after years of struggle seemed to confirm the liberal story of progress. Now that a generation or two has passed and many of these societies have either achieved independence or thrown away its advantages, the story has lost its moral gleam. There are few partisans of African and Asian independence left, and more than a few who are overtly nostalgic for the return of colonial rule.

Another metanarrative that sustained interest in the third world after World War II was socialist internationalism, the faith that newly independent states were a test bed for the possibilities of a socialist economy and way of life. Generations of Western leftists were lured to Cuba, Vietnam, and other places in the hopes of finding their dreams confirmed. The collapse of the Marxist and socialist project has ended this metanarrative of hope, and as it does, disillusioned and demotivated socialists turn away from developing societies altogether.

No new sinews of economic interdependence have been created to link zones of safety and zones of danger together. In the heyday of empire, there was at least ivory and copper, gold and timber. As the developed world entered the phase of permanent postindustrial revolution, based in knowledge and computers, it appears to stand in less need of the raw materials of the developing world. Large sectors of the world's population are not being drawn into globalized commerce but banished backward into sustained underdevelopment. The developed world is tied in ever-tighter linkage — the Internet, twenty-four-hour global trading, jet travel, global hotels, resorts, credit card networks, and so on — while sections of central Africa, Asia, Latin America, since they no longer even supply vital raw materials, cease to be of either economic or strategic concern.

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This leaves only one metanarrative drawing zones of safety and zones of danger together: the humanitarian narrative. We are in one world; we must shoulder each other's fate; the value of life is indivisible. What happens to the starving in Africa and the homeless in Asia must concern us all because we belong to one species. This narrative, with its charter document — the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — and its agencies of diffusion — the nongovernmental humanitarian agencies and the UN system — puts a strong priority on moral linkages over economic and strategic ones. The question is how television mediates this moral linkage.

We should consider the possibility, first, that the media change little at all. Our best stories — from King Lear to Peter Pan — seem to survive any number of retellings. Why *should* the technology of storytelling change the story? We should beware of technological determinism in thinking about the moral impact of media. The claim that global media globalizes the conscience might be an example of technological determinism at work. It is certainly true that modern real-time television news-gathering technology has shortened both the time and the distance separating zones of safety — the small number of liberal capitalist democracies that possess power, influence, and wealth — from the zones of danger — the small number of collapsing states in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America — where refugees and war victims stand in need of aid and assistance.

But it does not follow that media technology has reduced the "moral distance" between these zones. Real and moral distance are not the same. Real distance is abolished by technology; moral distance is only abolished by a persuasive story. Technology enables us to tell stories differently, but it does not necessarily change the story we want to tell. Indeed, one could say that the media follow where the moral story leads. To the extent that television takes any notice whatever of zones of danger, it does so in terms of a moral narrative of concern that antedates the arrival of television by several centuries. This narrative: that we are our brothers' keeper; that human beings belong to one species; that if we "can" help, we "must" help — all of this emerges out of the Judeo-Christian idea of human universality secularized in European natural law beginning in the sixteenth century. At best television merely allows us to tell this old moral story more efficiently. The medium is just a medium. The modern conscience had written its moral charter — the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — before television had even entered most of our living rooms. Television would not be in Kosovo or Kabul at all, if it were not for these antecedent moral narratives.

It may be the case that television cannot *create* any moral relationship between audience and victim where none exists already. If television's moral gaze is partial and promiscuous, it is because ours is no less so. The TV crews go where we were already looking. We intervene morally where we already can tell a story about a place. To care about one place is necessarily to cast another into shadow. There is no morally adequate reply to the charge that Europeans and North Americans, to the degree that they cared at all, cared more about Bosnia than Rwanda. The sources of our partiality were only too obvious. One was in Europe, the other in Africa; one was a frequent holiday destination, the other was off most people's map. For most white Europeans and North Americans this partiality was transparently a function of race, history, and tradition. But how can it be otherwise? Our knowledge is partial and incomplete; our narratives of engagement are bound to be inconsistent and biased. To lament this point is understandable, except when it is supposed that we *should* be capable of moral omniscience. We cannot be. It is simply unrealistic to expect that each of us should feel connection to every place in the world where victims are in danger. We are bound to care more about places and people we already know something about. It is certainly invidious to believe that white victims matter

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more than black ones, that coreligionists are more naturally a matter of our concern than nonbelievers; and we can counteract these biases where we can, but at the end of the day, we will care more about what we know something about, and if this is Bosnia, so be it. The media will simply reflect the biases intrinsic to their own audience: their coverage may indeed exacerbate them, but in itself, they are not responsible for them. Indeed, television coverage can do relatively little to counteract the inherent moral biases of its viewers. It follows where it and other media lead.

What is more to the point is that media ownership concentrates media power in mostly white European and North American hands, and their angle of vision determines the focus of world media coverage. For these reasons, natural partiality is grossly magnified, and the world's majority — nonwhite, non-North American, non-European — is forced to take the minority's moral priorities. This bias cannot be corrected by well-meaning gestures. It will only change as the majority takes economic power into its own hands and creates media institutions that reflect its own moral priorities. This is already occurring across southeast Asia, and there is no reason to suppose that it cannot happen eventually in Africa and Latin America.

The fact that television reflects but does not create moral relationships does not exclude the possibility that it may also distort these relationships. Three possible distortions are evident. First, television turns moral narratives into entertainment; second, television turns political narratives into humanitarian drama; third, television individualizes — it takes the part for the whole. All three forms of bias are interrelated yet distinct. Television news is an entertainment medium. It derives its revenue and influence from its capacity to make the delivery of information pleasurable. Pleasurable story lines are generally simple, gripping, and easy to understand. Now all moral life requires simplification, and all forms of moral identification proceed by way of fictions. In framing up our moral world, we all seek for good guys and bad guys, innocent victims and evil perpetrators. Nothing is intrinsically wrong about this resort to fictions and simplifications. It is also puritanical to suppose that moral problems should never be mixed with entertainment values. Moral drama is always compelling, and television can be easily forgiven for seeking to build revenue and ratings on the production of moral drama out of news.

"...television turns moral narratives into entertainment... television turns political narratives into humanitarian drama... television individualizes — it takes the part for the whole."

Dramatization only becomes problematic when the actors in our moral dramas stop playing the roles on which our identification with them depends. For moral roles frequently reverse: innocent victims turn perpetrators; perpetrators turn victims. In such circumstances, it may become difficult to alter the story line in the public mind. Serbs who were perpetrators of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia in 1993 turned out to be victims of ethnic cleansing in Croatia in 1995. But their demonization in 1993 foreclosed the possibility of empathy — and the assistance that rightly follows empathy — in 1995.

The distorting bias here is sentimentalization, because sentimental art, by definition, sacrifices nuance, ambivalence, and complexity in favor of strong emotion. Hence, it is art that prefers identification over truth. To the degree that television is an art form whose revenue stream depends on creating strong identifications, it is axiomatic that it will occasionally sacrifice moral truth. Occasionally, but not always: there are times when the sentimental is true, when we identify strongly with a story that happens to have got its facts straight.

The second distortion flows from the visual bias of the medium. Television is better at focusing on the consequences of political decisions than the rationale for the decisions themselves: hence on the thunder of the guns rather than the battle plans; the corpses in the

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ditch rather than the strategic goals of the ethnic cleansers. The visual bias of television has certain obvious advantages; it enables any viewer to measure the guilt that separates intentions from consequences; it allows a viewer to move, shot by shot, from the prevarications of politicians to the grimy realities these prevarications attempt to conceal. But the very intensity of the visual impact of television pictures obscures its limitations as a medium for telling stories. Every picture is *not* worth a thousand words. Pictures without words are meaningless. Even when pictures are accompanied by words, they can only tell certain stories. Television is relatively incoherent when it comes to establishing the political and diplomatic context in which humanitarian disaster, war crime, or famine take shape. It has a tendency to turn these into examples of man's inhumanity to man; it turns them from political into natural disasters, and in doing so, it actively obscures the context responsible for their occurrence. Its natural bias, therefore, is to create sentimental stories that by making viewers feel pity also, and not accidentally, makes them feel better about themselves.

Thus, television pictures from the Ethiopian famine in 1984 focused naturally on the pathos of the victims, not on the machinations of the elites who manufactured famine as an instrument of ethnic oppression or other long-term failures of the African economy or ecology. It did so simply because it chooses identification over insight, and it did so because television depends for revenue and influence on the heightened drama of this visual mimesis of one-to-one contact between the watching spectator and the suffering victim.

The third related difficulty is that television, like all forms of journalism, makes up its stories by means of *synecdoche,* by taking the part for the whole. Journalism is closer to fiction than to social science: its stories focus on exemplary individuals and makes large and usually tacit assumptions about their typicality. This is synecdoche: the starving widow and her suffering children who stand for the whole famished community of Somalia; the mute victim behind the barbed wire at Tranopole who stands for the suffering of the Bosnian people as a whole. Given that victims are numberless, it is natural that identification should proceed by means of focusing on single individuals. Synecdoche has the virtues of making the abstractions of exile, expulsion, starvation, and other forms of suffering into an experience sufficiently concrete and real to make empathy possible. But there are evident dangers. First, is the individual typical? Notoriously, television chooses exemplary victims, ones whose sufferings are spectacular and whose articulacy remains undiminished. Viewers trust experienced reporters to make these exemplary choices, but when viewers begin to question the typicality of the witness, they also begin to question the terms of their identification. When they feel that human suffering has been turned into entertainment cliche, they begin to feel manipulated: the ward full of abandoned orphans; the star-crossed Romeos and Juliets who loved each other across the ethnic divide and whose love shows up the folly of ethnic hatred; the plucky journalists who keep on publishing right through the shelling; the war-torn child whom the journalist adopts and spirits back to safety and endless interviews.[3] These forms of synecdoche forfeit any kind of complex identification with the whole panorama they are supposed to evoke.

"Notoriously, television chooses exemplary victims, ones whose sufferings are spectacular and whose articulacy remains undiminished."

The identification that synecdoche creates is intense but shallow. We feel for a particular victim, without understanding why or how he or she has come to be a victim; and empathy without understanding is bound to fritter away when the next plausible victim makes his or her appearance on our screen or when we learn something that apparently contradicts the image of simple innocence that the structure of synecdoche invited us to expect.

It may be, therefore, that television itself has something to do with the shallowness of forms of

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identification between victims and donors in zones of safety. Television personalizes, humanizes, but also depoliticizes moral relations, and in so doing, it weakens the understanding on which sustained empathy — and moral commitment — depend. The visual biases of television thus deserve some place in our explanation of "compassion fatigue" and "donor fatigue" — growing reluctance by rich and well-fed publics to give to humanitarian charities or support governmental foreign aid. Real distance has been drastically shortened by visual technology, but moral distance remains undiminished. If we are fatigued, it is because we feel assailed by heterodox and promiscuous visual claims and appeals for help coming from all corners of the world. Moral narratives have been banalized by repetition and in repetition have lost their impact and force.

"In their recourse to the pure humanitarian narrative of support for innocent victims, the aid agencies actively contribute to the compassion fatigue they purport to deplore."

Aid agencies, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), are waking up to the erosion of the narratives of moral engagement on which they depend to sustain both the morale of their field staff and the political support of donor governments. For aid agencies are moral storytellers: they tell stories to mediate and motivate, and they typically use television to get these stories and messages to pass from the zones of danger back to the zones of safety.

Typically the stories aid agencies tell are different from the ones television journalists tell, and these differences illustrate the moral dilemmas aid agencies characteristically encounter. Unlike journalists, aid agencies cannot point the finger of blame. They can name victims, but they cannot identify perpetrators, or if they do so, they must be careful not to do so in such a way as to jeopardize their access to victims. This limitation is especially the case for the ICRC, which has made moral neutrality its touchstone; but even groups such as Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), that have explicitly contested moral neutrality have learned that if they do engage in blame, they may gain credibility among victims, but they lose it among perpetrators and consequently lose the capacity to work in the field. If tables are turned, and victims become perpetrators and perpetrators victims, aid agencies that have told a blame-heavy story may find it impossible to change their line of response to the disaster.

Yet, if aid agencies refuse to tell a political story — one that attributes causation and consequences for the disaster they are helping to relieve — they risk falling back on a narrative of simple victimhood, empty of context and meaning. This disempowers the agencies when they appeal to governments and ordinary people for support. For purely sentimental, purely humanitarian stories create shallow identifications in the audiences they are intended to sway; such stories deny the audience the deeper understanding — bitter, contradictory, political, complex — on which a durable commitment depends. In the recourse to the pure humanitarian narrative of support for innocent victims, the aid agencies actively contribute to the compassion fatigue they purport to deplore.

Getting out of this contradiction is not easy. The pure humanitarian narrative preserves neutrality, and with it the agencies' autonomy and capacity to act. A political narrative commits the agency to a point of view that compromises its credibility with the group it has accused.

Aid agencies such as the ICRC have responded to this dilemma, in effect, by telling two moral stories, one in public, the other in private. The one reserved for public consumption preserves the neutrality of the organization and avoids attributing political responsibility for the disaster, war, or conflict in which it is intervening. The private message is more political: it is directed to governments, donors, and sympathetic journalists and does point the finger of blame. In the former Yugoslavia, the ICRC's public

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story offered emotionally charged but ethnically neutral descriptions of humanitarian tragedy, whereas the private back-channel story, told by its delegates and high officials, did not hesitate to attribute blame and responsibility and recommend political action. Its public statements about the Serbian camps in central Bosnia in 1992 preserved ethical neutrality; the private messages of its delegates on the ground did not mince words.[4]

Organizations that split their message in this way risk appearing duplicitous and hypocritical. The objective may be laudable: to preserve sufficient credit with perpetrators that access to victims can be preserved. But inevitably a certain credit is lost with victims and those who side with victims, notably journalists.

Faced with these challenges to their moral integrity, some agencies have tried to harmonize both public and private storytelling. Médecins sans Frontières has been most explicit: refusing to be even-handed as between perpetrator and victim; refusing to offer humanitarian assistance when the political conditions are unacceptable; denouncing both perpetrators and outside powers when they obstruct humanitarian efforts. In Afghanistan, likewise, Oxfam and UNICEF have refused to split their messages about Taliban treatment of women, publicly denouncing Taliban attitudes toward women. There are risks in this outspokenness — not merely that the Taliban may shut these agencies out but that these agencies themselves become more enamored of the politics of moral gesture than of reaching and assisting female victims themselves. So if the ICRC runs the moral risk of duplicity and hypocrisy by sharply distinguishing between what it says in public and what it says in private, agencies that refuse this distinction run the risk of moral narcissism: doing what feels right in preference to what makes a genuine difference.[5]

But these are not the only dilemmas that occur when aid agencies try to tell moral stories. Their humanitarian action is frequently exploited as a moral alibi. Aid agencies become victim of a certain moral synecdoche of their own. Thus, the fact that the ICRC has been doing humanitarian work in Afghanistan for a decade is taken, by the watching world, as a sign that "at least" "we" are doing something about the human misery there. The "we" in question is the moral audience of the civilized world, and this "we" has proven adept at taking moral credit for humanitarian interventions in which it has strictly no right to take credit at all. For there is no "we"; the so-called civilized world has no such moral unity, no such concentrated vision, and if politicians who represent its concerns claim credit for the humanitarian work of agencies in the field, they do so illegitimately.

"There are risks in this outspokenness — not merely that [they may be shut out] but that these agencies themselves become more enamored of the politics of moral gesture than of reaching and assisting victims."

Anyone engaged in humanitarian action in the field is indignantly aware of the extent to which his or her individual efforts are incorporated by the watching moral audience on television as proof of the West's unfailing moral benevolence. For television does not like to depict misery without also showing that someone is doing something about it. We cannot have misery without aid workers. They conjure away the horror by suggesting that help is at hand. This is synecdoche at its most deceiving, for if help is getting through in this instance, it may not be getting through in others, and sometimes help may actually make a bad situation worse — for example, if food assistance falls into the hands of combatants and enables them to continue a civil war. Television coverage of humanitarian assistance allows the West the illusion that it is doing something; in this way, coverage becomes an alternative to more serious political engagement. The Afghan civil war cannot be stopped by humanitarian assistance; in many ways, humanitarian assistance prolongs the war by sustaining the populations who submit to its horrors. Only active political intervention by the Great Powers forcing the regional powers bordering Afghanistan to

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shut off their assistance to the factions is likely to end the war. Aid workers in the region indignantly believe — and with reason — that their humanitarian presence allows the West the moral alibi to abstain from serious political engagement with the problem.

Thus, when humanitarian agencies bring television to a conflict site, they may not get what they bargained for. They may have wanted to generate stories that would focus the attention of policy makers on the need for substantive diplomatic or political intervention; what they get instead is the production of moral drama: sentimental tales of suffering, using a poor country as a backdrop, which, by stimulating exercises in generosity, simply reinforces donors' sensation of moral superiority.

This idea certainly goes against the received wisdom about the impact of television on foreign policy and humanitarian intervention. It has been generally supposed that television coverage drives policy and intervention alike, the pictures creating a demand that "something must be done." We have already questioned the technological determinism implicit in these assumptions, by arguing that it is not the pictures that have the impact but the particular story — moral or otherwise — that we happen to tell about these pictures. Where stories are wanting, television cannot supply them. Those who have examined the impact of television coverage on the propensity of governments to intervene in zones of danger would take this argument still further. After closely studying cases such as the Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia interventions, most analysts come away with a marked degree of skepticism about the efficacy of the so-called "CNN effect."[6] Policy makers insist that they decide whether to commit their countries to action not according to what they see on the screen but according to whether it is in the stable, long-term national interest of their countries. According to these studies, three years of drastic and sometimes ghastly television footage did little to move European policy makers away from their reluctance to commit troops and planes to bring the Bosnian war to an end. At most, the television images stimulated a humanitarian response: aid agencies moved in, donations flowed, and some of the misery on the screen was alleviated. But television did little or nothing to drive the Bosnia policy of Whitehall or the White House. Here the determinant factor against intervention was Vietnam-bred caution about sinking into a quagmire. No amount of sentimental coverage of humanitarian disaster was able to shift the policy makers' and military analysts' basic perception that this was a "lose-lose" situation.

Both the victims themselves and the humanitarian agencies in Bosnia supposed that getting the cameras there would help trigger decisive military and political action. Both were angrily disillusioned when this action was not forthcoming. It was as if both believed that misery tells its own story, that pictures inevitably suggest the moral conclusions to be drawn from them. But, as I have argued, pictures do not tell their own story, and misery does not motivate on its own.

Yet skeptics go too far when they claim that television pictures had no impact on the foreign policy of states or the conscience of a watching public. Policy makers and military planners have an institutional stake in denying that they are at the mercy of television images and public pressure. It is essential to their *amour propre* and professional detachment to believe that they make policy on grounds of rational interest rather than on the basis of inflammatory and sentimental television reports. Yet their disclaimers on this score are not entirely to be believed. What the pictures from Bosnia undoubtedly did engage was a small but vocal constituency of people who felt disgust and shame and were roused to put pressure on the politicians who stood by and did nothing. It was not the pictures themselves that made the difference but the small political constituency in favor of intervention that they helped to call into being. Television itself did not create this constituency; rather, the images helped the constituency widen its basis of support; it could point to these images and draw in others who felt the same outrage and disgust as they did.

The numbers who care about foreign issues will always be much smaller than for domestic ones, but their influence is out of all proportion to their numbers. Most of them — in the press, the humanitarian agencies, the think tanks — have the power to create and mold public opinion.[7] For three years, a small constituency pounded away at the

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shame of Bosnia, and in the end their campaign worked — not, I hasten to add, because political leaders themselves felt any great shame but because, in time, they were made to feel that they were failing to exercise "leadership." Once a political leader feels his or her legitimacy and authority are put under sustained moral question, he or she is bound to act sooner or later. Added to this, in the Bosnian case, was the undoubted fact that prolonged inaction was beginning to erode the cohesiveness of the NATO alliance and open up important splits between Europe and America. In the end, the Clinton administration intervened and set the Dayton process in motion, not because it had been shamed by television but because it felt, with good reason, that at last an overriding political interest was at stake in Bosnia: the coherence of the alliance structure and the continued hegemony of America in European affairs. In other words, humanitarian pressure, in the form of outraged editorials and gruesome television footage, set up a train of consequences that only three years later eventually helped to generate a national interest basis for intervention. This national interest drove policy, but it does not follow that the intervention was motivated solely by national interest considerations. The humanitarian, moral pressure was integral to the process by which a reason for intervention was eventually discerned and acted on.

All of this suggests that the moral stories we tell through television are less influential than their visual impact would suggest, but they are not as unimportant as skeptics would imply; and that they do play a continuing role in structuring the interventions, humanitarian and otherwise, through which the zones of safety attempt to regulate and assist the zones of danger.

As humanitarian agencies confront the question of how to use television more effectively to sustain engagement, by donors and governments, and to counter "donor fatigue," they need to address the general breakdown of metanarratives linking the developed and developing worlds. We have two metanarratives on offer, globalization and the chaos narrative: economic integration and collapsing time and distance constraints for the wealthy few in the northern world; state fragmentation, ethnic war, and economic disintegration for the unfortunate citizens of as many as twenty-five nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The rhetoric of globalization — and especially the globalization of media — altogether conceals the fact that this promise is withheld from the majority of the world's population. Indeed, as the developed world integrates still further, it is reducing, not extending, its contacts with the worlds of danger. Highly mediatized relief operations, such as Somalia, Goma, and Afghanistan, conceal the shrinking percentages of national income devoted to foreign aid, just as highly mediatized charitable campaigns such as Live Aid conceal the shrinkage of private donations to international humanitarian charities. The metanarrative — the big story — is one of disengagement, while the moral lullaby we allow our humanitarian consciences to sing is that we are coming closer and closer. TSC

NOTES

[1] See my *Warrior's Honour: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* (New York: Henry Holt, 1998), chap. 4.

[2] See Robert D. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996).

[3] Gilbert Holleufer, "Images of Humanitarian Crises: Ethical Implications," *International Review of the Red Cross* (November-December 1996): 609-13.

[4] See Roy Gutman, *Witness to Genocide* (Middleton, Wisc.: Lisa Drew, 1993).

[5] Michael Keating, "The Reality Gap," *Geographical Magazine,* September 1996, 23-24; also M. Keating, "Painting It Black: Who's to Blame?" *Crosslines* 18-19 (December 1995): 21-22.

[6] Nik Gowing, "Real-Time Television Coverage of Armed Conflicts and Diplomatic Crises: Does It Pressure or Distort Foreign Policy Decisions?" Joan Shorenstein Center, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, occasional paper, June 1994; see also Steven Livingston, "Clarifying the CNN Effect: An Examination of Media Effects According to Type of Military Intervention," Joan Shorenstein Center, Harvard University, occasional paper, June 1997; see also Nik Gowing "Media Coverage: Help or Hindrance in Conflict Prevention?" report for the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, New York, 1997.

[7] Larry Minear, Colin Scott, and Thomas G. Weiss, *The News Media, Civil War and Humanitarian Action* (Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner, 1996).

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World Population Woes

by Charley Reese

It never fails that when I write about the problem of population, someone always refers me to the works of people who have "proved" that there is plenty of food and plenty of space for several billion more people than exist today.

Not to be too blunt, but that's hogwash. Statistics describe — they do not prove anything — and theoretical models are in practical terms hokum. That's because the world does not exist as a theory. It exists in a finite amount of rock and dirt and water. Nor do people exist in theory. They exist in individual bundles of flesh and blood in specific places in specific circumstances at a specific point of time.

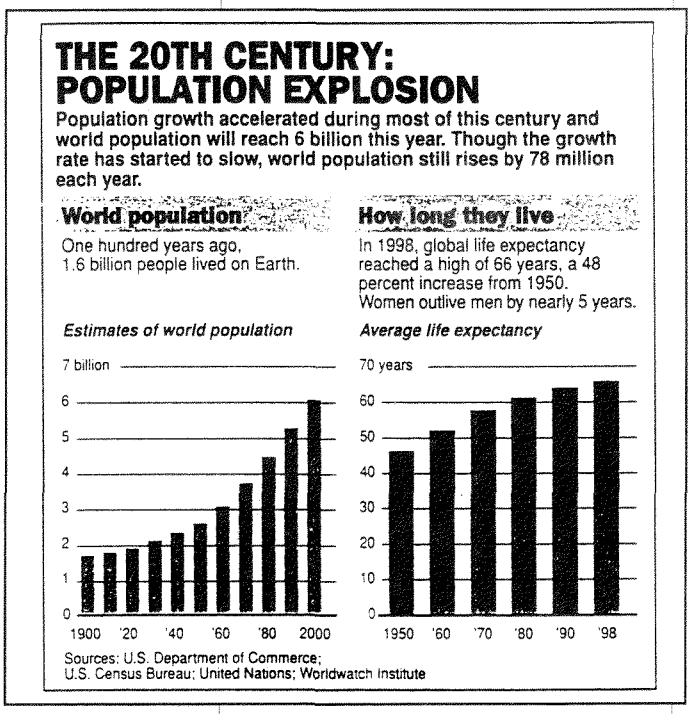
The fact that not many people live in Nebraska doesn't add an inch of living space to a family of 12 crowded into one room in Cairo, Egypt or Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The fact that American grain prices are low and the storage bins are overflowing doesn't put an ounce of food in the mouth of a starving child in the Sudan. The fact that there is plenty of room to build more housing doesn't move one desperate child off the lethal streets of Rio. Street kids there have become so numerous that occasionally businessmen have hired assassins to kill them where they sleep. People in one poor area of Brazil were discovered eating the flesh of human bodies tossed in a trash dump.

Let us chuck theory and deal with the world as it is, not as we would like it to be and certainly not as, in theory, it might be. The world, like a used car, comes "as is."

Those who do not think overpopulation is a problem should visit the U.S.-Mexican border, where they can see with their own eyes one effect of population exceeding carrying capacity. That effect is migration, the steady movement of people from places where they can't live decently to places where they believe they will have a better chance of surviving.

And if you think migration isn't a problem, you should consult any Native American and ask him or her what the effects of migration are. A small number of Europeans didn't steal the Indians' lands. The Indians just drowned in a tidal wave of European migration. Those Europeans came to North America for the same reason Mexicans, Central Americans and Chinese are coming to North America.

More than two decades ago, executives of a large seafood restaurant chain predicted the price of seafood would go far higher than beef. Why? Because


THE 20TH CENTURY:
POPULATION EXPLOSION
Population growth accelerated during most of this century and world population will reach 6 billion this year. Though the growth rate has started to slow, world population still rises by 78 million each year.
World population
One hundred years ago, 1.6 billion people lived on Earth.
How long they live
In 1998, global life expectancy reached a high of 66 years, a 48 percent increase from 1950. Women outlive men by nearly 5 years.
Estimates of world population
7 billion
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
1900 '20 '40 '60 '80 2000
Average life expectancy
70 years
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1950 '60 '70 '80 '90 '98
Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce; U.S. Census Bureau; United Nations; Worldwatch Institute

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the fishes of the sea are being fished out. This one restaurant chain in the United States was forced to buy from the four corners of the world just to supply its own customers in the United States.

I had asked them if they ever bought from Japan, which has one of the world's largest fishing fleets. "Oh, heck no," was the answer. "The Japanese use every scrap they catch." The boundless sea is no longer boundless because population pressure is causing it to be polluted and overfished. And the prediction about prices proved accurate.

I don't think abortion and sterilization are the answers — though, by all means, contraceptives should be widely available. The difficult answer is a human-oriented, rather than corporate-oriented, form of economic development. Today's international aid and economic development models are both corrupt and designed to benefit corporations, not people.

A good book on this point is *The Road to Hell: The Ravaging Effects of Foreign Aid and International Charity.* The author is Michael Maren, and the publisher is the Free Press. Maren is no conservative ideologue dealing in theory and dogma. He's a liberal, a veteran of the Peace Corps, Catholic Relief Services and USAID. He writes from personal experience, and what he saw will enrage any decent person. As I said, let's junk theory and deal with reality. TSC

The Welfare State Strikes Back

by Don Barnett

Concerned that not enough people are using Medicaid and longing for the days, just 5 years ago, when almost 1 out of 9 Americans used food stamps the Clinton administration has launched an outreach campaign to re-build the rolls of the federal programs.

One of the facts to be advertised is that use of food stamps and Medicaid by immigrants will not trigger a "public charge finding." "Public charge," a term used in immigration law, refers to persons who may be inadmissible to the U.S. because the INS or a State Department consular officer abroad believes the individual will likely be unable to support himself or herself — or, will likely become a "public charge."

The public charge provision of immigration law can play a role at two junctures in the immigration process: 1) in deciding whether or not to admit or re-admit an individual from another country, and 2) during application for legal permanent resident ("green card" holder) status. Public charge considerations cannot be brought to bear during application for citizenship. Legally, an immigrant who becomes a public charge within 5 years of arrival can be deported.

The threat of a public charge finding has been somewhat of a deterrent to public benefits usage for individuals seeking legal permanent residency in the U.S.. But that is largely because of public confusion about the law. The law will be much less of a deterrent as of proposed rules from the administration clarifying and amending the public charge clause (Federal Register May 99).

For starters, the law totally exempts entire groups of immigrants from public charge consideration. Over the past two decades approximately 5 million legal new arrivals have been spared review under the law because they arrived as refugees, were granted asylum, or were in some other group granted extraordinary immigration privileges. This includes

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almost all Cubans and those seeking legal permanent residency under the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act of 1997, an amnesty for undocumented immigrants known as NACCAR. It also covers Haitians seeking residency under the Haitian Refugee and Immigration Fairness (a direct spin-off of NACCAR) and Amerasians and "Lautenberg" parolees (certain Southeast Asians and former Soviets). By definition the 300,000 or so illegals who arrive here to stay each year also avoid the law.

In spite of this, the majority of those seeking to immigrate to the U.S. must pass the public charge test. But the only benefit programs that can cause a public charge problem are cash programs like TANF, SSI, local GA or Medicaid if it is used for long-term institutional care. Even usage of cash assistance hardly guarantees a public charge finding unless it is part of a long-term pattern. Furthermore, use of cash assistance by, say, citizen children who are receiving TANF payments is not a public charge issue for the parents unless the parents are using the assistance as their sole means of support.

A non-citizen family seeking legal permanent residency (a "green card") can freely use all of the following programs at the same time without being considered a public charge: food stamps, public housing, Medicaid, WIC, the Earned Income Tax Credit on wages earned, TANF and disability SSI for children and a host of smaller non-cash programs such as school lunches, transportation vouchers, energy assistance, job training, etc. Further, once this hypothetical family obtains legal permanent residency they can leave the country for up to half a year every year without any interruption in benefits or affect on their right to citizenship.

A recent GAO report found citizens naturalizing in 1996 and 1997 were three and a half times more likely to be using SSI than native born. It also found usage of TANF among the new citizens to be running at least two times the rate found among native-born. (In California 23.7 percent of the new citizens received Medicaid in 1997!) This would indicate the possibility of conditions that could trigger the ultimate sanction of public charge law — deportation of an individual who becomes a public charge within five years of arrival. But, according to the INS no one in recent memory has ever been deported under this provision of the law. In fact, since 1972, fewer than 10 individuals have been deported for this reason. With a media fixated on stories about mistreatment of individuals at the hands of the INS perhaps deportation of welfare-dependent newcomers is not a good idea. Such enforcement of the law would ignite a media firestorm. But would merely denying a Green Card to welfare-dependent individuals be so unthinkable? Apparently so as this, too, has not happened in recent memory.

"Public charge" law, at least as it affects those who manage to set foot on American soil, is null and void. Like medical screening, and the citizenship test it is a quaint relic of a bygone era and that's good news for the welfare state. TSC

There's Nothing As Permanent As a Temporary Refugee

Temporary protection for foreigners in distress has figured prominently in discussions of immigration policy for some time. Hondurans, Kosovar Albanians, and Colombians are only the most recent groups considered for some kind of limited safe haven. Temporary protection amounts to a limited grant of refugee status, offering foreigners who would not otherwise be allowed to remain in the United States limited sanctuary until an emergency (civil war, widespread violence, or natural disaster) in their home country passes. For the most part, temporary protection has been offered to aliens already in the United States, usually illegally, who do not qualify for asylum but whom we are unwilling to deport.

As attractive as temporary protection seems on the surface, there is an enormous, and unbridgeable, gap between the theory and the reality. Forty years of experience have shown that "temporary" protection almost always results in permanent settlement. Whatever the theoretical benefits of temporary protection, it is clear that in the real world there is nothing as permanent as a temporary refugee.

— Mark Krikorian in *Backgrounder*, August 1999

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HR 73 — Protecting America's Sovereignty

Birthright citizenship — a limited right

by William Buchanan

Section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) grants American citizenship to anyone born on American soil regardless of the status of the parents. To remedy this, Rep. Brian Bilbray (R-CA) has introduced HR 73, The Citizenship Reform Act of 1999. This bill would deny automatic U.S. citizenship to children born here to illegal aliens and legal non-immigrants (tourists, students, temporary workers, etc.). It would reserve this precious gift for children with at least one parent who is a U.S. citizen, national, or legal immigrant. This bill is constitutional and it is necessary to protect America's sovereignty.

Why HR 73 is Constitutional

Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment to our Constitution states: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, *and subject to the jurisdiction thereof,* are citizens of the United States..." Proponents of the current law claim this phrase is the indestructible foundation for our policy of unlimited birthright citizenship.

America is in the citizenship business in a big way. It has offered this gift by every known means — election, naturalization, treaty, descent *(jus sanguinus),* and birthright — while moving continuously toward a concept of citizenship by consent. Among these, birthright citizenship is a graft from the most unlikely roots.

Combining the crowns of both England and Scotland upon one head (James I, in 1603) was legally problematic since each country maintained a separate parliament. A brilliant attorney, Sir Edward Coke, "resolved" this conundrum. An element of his solution — subjectship — proved tenacious. Children born upon land ruled by the king, entered into a compact with him: They were his "subjects" and owed their lives to his protection and therefore *owed allegiance to him for life (jus soli).*

Filtered by John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and the American experience, the 'subject' became a 'citizen' and allegiance (now voluntary) was transferred to the community. Along the way, the compact with the king became the social contract and *jus soli* developed into birthright citizenship. Prior to the Civil War, however, only certain whites could gather under that umbrella. The question is: how far did the 14th Amendment go to broaden this coverage?

What Did the Amendment's Framer's Mean?

The citizenship clause of the 14th Amendment was not included in the original House version. It was introduced as an amendment to the amendment by its Senate sponsor, Sen. Jacob Howard, who asserted that the amendment "will not, of course, include persons born in the United States who are foreigners, aliens, who belong to the families of ambassadors or foreign ministers accredited to the Government of the United States..." (U.S. Congress, 39th Congress, *Congressional Globe*, p.2890). Why was this amendment proposed?

The Republicans, who dominated the 39th Congress, were keenly aware that while the 13th Amendment had ended the enslavement of black Americans, it did not necessarily make them citizens. In 1857, in the famous Dred Scott case, the Supreme Court had gone out of its way to declare (by a 7-2 vote) that the Constitution denied American citizenship to blacks, whether free or slave.

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Republicans believed this was morally wrong, but also feared that if only whites could vote in the South, they would return only Democrats.

Section 1 of the Amendment would overturn Dred Scott and declare that former slaves and their progeny were American citizens (and eligible to vote). Few in the Congress intended more than this. Indeed, much of the debate on this section centered around senators' fears that courts would rule the amendment also applied to American Indians whom they regarded as hostile "savages."

An apprehensive Sen. James Doolittle, for example, pointed out that "All the Indians upon reservations within the several States are most clearly subject to our jurisdiction, both civil and military." Sen. George Williams remarked: "I would not agree to this proposed constitutional amendment if I supposed it made Indians ... citizens of the United States."

"...it appears that questions of jurisdiction and allegiance apply to the parents. Only if parents qualify are their children granted birthright citizenship."

The highly-respected Senator Lyman Trumbull, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, sought to reassure them: "...'subject to the jurisdiction thereof'," he said, means "subject to the *complete* jurisdiction thereof." The "wild Indians of the plains" and those living on reservations within states, did not qualify.

Sen. Howard agreed: "...the word 'jurisdiction,' as here employed, ought to be construed so as to imply a *full and complete* jurisdiction on the part of the United States."

Sen. Trumbull went on to make a second point. "They [American Indians] are not subject to our jurisdiction in the sense of owing *allegiance solely* to the United States."

In the minds of Senators debating the 14th Amendment, it appears that questions of jurisdiction and allegiance apply to the parents. Only if the parents qualify are their children granted birthright citizenship. And the reason is fairly obvious: a king may *impose* allegiance upon an infant "subject," but an infant is incapable of *giving* allegiance.

More to our point, illegal alien and non-immigrant parents are not subject to the complete jurisdiction of the United States, do not owe her their sole allegiance, and therefore cannot qualify their children as citizens under the 14th Amendment.

American Indian Jurisdiction?

John Elk was born in that part of the Louisiana Purchase that came to be called Nebraska. Granted statehood in 1867, Nebraska limited the vote to adult male citizens who were *bona fide* residents of the state for six months.

Elk had renounced his tribal membership and by 1880 had lived in Omaha for over a year. He claimed the right to vote in Nebraska, arguing that he was a U.S. citizen by birthright based on the 14th Amendment.

The Supreme Court rejected Elk's claim (*Elk v. Wilkins* 112 U.S. 94 [1884]). Echoing the Senate debate, the Court found: "The evident meaning of ['subject to the jurisdiction thereof'] is not merely subject in some respect or degree to the jurisdiction of the United States, but completely subject to their political jurisdiction, and owing them direct and immediate allegiance."

The Court went on: "Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States ... although in a geographical sense born in the United States, are no more 'born in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof' within the meaning of the first section of the fourteenth amendment, than the children of subjects of any foreign government born within the domain of that government..."

The Court, in so many words, agreed that the status of the parents determines the citizenship of the child. To qualify children for birthright citizenship, based on the 14th Amendment, parents must owe *"direct and immediate allegiance"* to the U.S. and be "*completely subject*" to its jurisdiction.

Had Mr. Elk been born, say, in Boston, Massachusetts, of American Indian parents who were no longer affiliated with any tribe, he would probably

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have been a U.S. citizen by birth.

There is a certain purity about this decision because it explores only the reach of the 14th Amendment. "Indians not taxed" were specifically excluded from coverage under the 1866 Civil Rights Act — the *statute law* that preceded Sec. 301 of the INA.

Legal Immigrant Jurisdiction?

A legal immigrant to the United States, unlike a citizen, is still "subject to the jurisdiction" of the country of his or her birth. He or she can be drafted for military service there and is entitled to benefits and privileges there that might be denied to an American citizen. These might include the right to vote, own property, attend public schools, obtain welfare, etc. So it is fair to say that they do not owe "*direct and immediate allegiance*" to the U.S. and are not "*completely subject*" to its jurisdiction. So what is the citizenship status of the legal immigrant's child born in the U.S.?

Wong Kim Ark was born in California in 1873 to *legal* immigrant Chinese parents. Returning from a visit to China in 1895, Mr. Wong was denied entry because, it was claimed, he was not a U.S. citizen.

In rejecting this argument and declaring Mr. Wong to be a citizen (*U.S. v. Wong Kim Ark* 169 U.S. 649 [1898]), the Supreme Court had to wrestle with several issues.

First, constitutional law begins the day ratification is complete. Hundreds of thousands of Americans had been born here to immigrants in the 30 years since ratification. Many had voted, paid taxes, and/or served in the military assuming they were American citizens. A ruling against Mr. Wong might prove to be extremely disruptive, as well as, unfair.

Second, attorneys for the U.S. reminded the Court of the precedent set in *Elk.* They argued that "Wong Kim Ark, although born in the ... United States of America, is not ... a citizen thereof, the mother and father of the said Wong Kim Ark being Chinese persons and subjects of the Emperor of China..."

To get around these obstacles, the Court searched for a *definition of citizen*. Finding the common law expression "natural born" in the Constitution, the justices concluded that citizenship must be based on English common law (*jus soli*). This is controversial because, as we have noted, the common law prescribed for subjects, not citizens. Moreover, all the signers of the Constitution had once been natural-born subjects of the British king and born in permanent allegiance to him! By waging revolution, they had cast off their birthright pledges in favor of a society based increasingly on consent.

The Court then constructed an allegiance for the parents based on *domicil(e),* a word which they employed 21 times in arriving at this conclusion: "...a child born in the United States, of parents of Chinese descent, who at the time of his birth, are subjects of the Emperor of China, but have a permanent domicil(e) and residence in the United States, and are there carrying on business, and are not employed in any diplomatic or official capacity under the Emperor of China, becomes at the time of his birth a citizen of the United States."

The Random House College Dictionary defines "domicile" in law as "a permanent *legal* residence." Gifts' Law Dictionary says a "person can have many transient residences ... but only one legal domicile."

Once again, in a ruling based strictly on the 14th Amendment, the status of the parents was held to be crucial in determining the citizenship of the child. The hopes of the advocates of unlimited birthright citizenship notwithstanding, *Wong Kim Ark* says nothing about the children of illegal and non-immigrant aliens. And it is inconceivable that illegal alien parents could have a legal domicile in the U. S.

Why HR 73 is Necessary

In addition to being constitutional for these several reasons, HR 73 is necessary to help preserve and protect the nation.

Geography

With 5,000 miles of border and many more miles of coastline, modern communications and air travel, and over 20 million non-immigrant visas issued yearly, a policy of bestowing citizenship on the children of illegal aliens and legal non-immigrants provides a loophole that endangers our very sovereignty.

Numbers

An estimated 200,000 babies are born in the U.S. each year to illegal alien mothers — 100,000 in

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California alone, Nobody knows how many more are born to foreign visitors, temporary workers, and students. Giving birth to a U.S. citizen only takes a moment or two on any patch of U.S. soil. It's now quite possible for millions of aliens to give birth in the U.S. every year.

The Duel of the Duals

This discussion occurs against the background of the "Citizenship USA" scandals and changes in the attitudes of many govern-ments. To cite only the most egregious example, the Mexican government recently accorded dual nationality to its citizens who naturalize in the U.S.

In the past, Mexican citizens who immigrated to America were looked upon with contempt by Mexico for abandoning the mother country. Now, in their greatly increased numbers, recent immigrants to America are seen by Mexico as potential advocates for its territorial claims, as a source of political influence, or at least as facilitators of a more effective "safety valve." In offering dual nationality, Mexico seeks to retain the allegiance of its citizens who become U.S. citizens — in spite of the oath of allegiance they take to America — and to discourage their assimilation.

Many other countries offer dual nationality or even dual citizenship to their émigrés who naturalize here. Still others simply don't recognize the right of their citizens to give up their citizenship. There is always a political dimension to such considerations. These developments raise questions about the meaning of American citizenship and identity. They have magnified the importance of defining just who is, and who can be, an American citizen.

Problems We Would Incur

Enforcing HR 73 would require procedures for confirming the status of newborns. We might have to urge parents-to-be to establish their status prior to giving birth. The INS might have to assist in the process. A dual state/federal Birth Certification and Social Security Number process is a possibility. In any case, we should study other countries' methods.

Problems We Would Avoid

If birthright citizenship is hard to manage, administering justice when the mother is illegal and the child is a citizen requires decisions from judges, welfare departments, and INS officials that would make Solomon cringe. Who gets the welfare check? Do we assign the child to a relative? Do we keep the child here and deport the mother? And then there is the very substantial drain on revenues to be considered.

Another Constitutional Amendment?

The Fourteenth Amendment gives Congress "the power to enforce" this amendment "by appropriate legislation" (Section 5). Obviously, we believe if the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment came back today, they would point to HR 73 as an appropriate legislated definition of birthright citizenship. Some argue, nevertheless, that only a constitutional amendment is sufficient to change current practice.

However, a constitutional amendment could not pass at this time. The American people just don't know the issue. In the unlikely event that HR 73 would be overturned as unconstitutional, the publicity such a case would generate might make amendment politically feasible. HR 73 is the logical place to start.

Conclusion

The cases of Wong Kim Ark and John Elk show that the 14th Amendment guarantees automatic birthright citizenship to children born here to U.S. citizens and legal immigrants. The extension of this grant to the children of illegal immigrants and legal non-immigrants (tourists, students, temporary workers, etc.), on the other hand, is based on section 301 of the INA which HR 73 seeks to amend.

The framers of the 14th Amendment did not mean to say: "Alien! Break our laws, and we will reward you!" They did care about American sovereignty. To argue otherwise, you would have to believe that the Congress and the states, after fighting a bloody and corrosive civil war to *save* the union, would then wish to amend the Preamble to the Constitution: "in order to form a less perfect Union, invite domestic Discord, promote Welfare dependency, secure the Curses of Division, and set our Posterity adrift."

Millions of Americans have given life or limb to defend the values we hold dear and the lives we live as citizens of America. Awarding American citizenship automatically to the children of aliens who break our laws or are just passing through, cheapens it beyond all recognition. TSC

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Population Competition:

Not safety, but folly in numbers

A Book Review/Essay by David Simcox

Humanity has long had a mostly irrational and at times fatal attraction to increasing its numbers, an attraction that is too often blind to limits of resources, space, and the exigencies of an adequate quality of life. Human communities, whether tribes, nations, ethnicities, religions or political parties, find their validation and their safety in growth of their numbers — and in the decline of the numbers of their rivals.

"Number power," as Jack Parsons terms it, has historically been humanity's golden counter of status in intergroup and interstate relations. Humanity's pernicious addiction to number power fuels the seductive strategy of population competition, and its supporting tactic of competitive breeding. For Parsons, as for any thinking person, these urges have become supremely destructive forces for the planet and its nations, including our own, that must ultimately balance population and finite resources.

Human Population Competition: A Study of the Pursuit of Power Through Numbers
by Jack Parsons
New York: Edwin Mellen Press
803 pages, $225.00

Parsons amply documents how human groups embrace numbers as the great elixir that guarantees success in the quest for military power, political influence, economic prosperity, and just plain prestige and validation. While his arguments against this mind-set are familiar, he asserts them boldly and trenchantly. The unending drive of western societies for bigger numbers to spur the economy, Parsons says, is a form of modern-day "mercantilism," a discredited economic theory summarized in the words of a 17th century French civil servant, "subjects and cattle must be multiplied"

Today's cornucopians have their roots in such outdated thought: "if population is the main resource, as Julian Simon argued, the more there are of us, the bigger the resource base, and the better off we all must be." Parsons sees the triumphs in science, economics and world-transforming inventions of tiny Scotland as just one of a number of historical refutations that teeming masses are necessary to produce an abundance of genius.

Parsons contends that increases in *quantity* of humans — whether for military service, as workers, or as consumers — inevitably involves a trade off on *quality*. Quality versus quantity and the overlooked opportunity costs of having more people are central to the Parsonian thesis: More soldiers, but more poorly trained and armed; More workers, but with less training and capital to back them up; More consumers, but each with less to spend and more demands for public support; More taxpayers, but each with less ability to pay and more needs.

The Variety of Human Reproduction Outlooks

The book's title does not do justice to the amplitude of Parsons' interests. This ambitious book is also about the human population's competition with its own environment and with the planet's other life forms. It discusses the centrality of population competition in natural selection — humans not excluded. It has a great deal to say, however episodically, about the anthropology, biology and ideology of human reproduction, citing such obscure cultures such as the Inuit, the Kalahari desert people, and the ancient Babylonians. Did you know, for

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example, that the Kalahari men contracept by diverting their semen through a puncture at the base of the penis?

These two volumes abound with historical and mythological examples of man's innate drive for number power, as well as his recognition limits. In Genesis, the most seductive promise Yahweh can give to Abraham is to make his progeny as numerous as the stars. The comfortably atheistic Parsons notes dourly that most aspects of modern religions' attitudes toward sex, births and population appear to stem from "ancient, mindless and dysfunctional roots" such as these. Yet he points out that pronatalism seemingly inherent in Christianity did not emerge until the era of Thomas Aquinas. Such early Christian thinkers as Tertullian were proto-Malthusians.

The millions who see "increase and multiply" as an unending mandate, Parsons stresses, ignore the numerous biblical passages that are antinatalist. In the rush to create more people for God and His true faiths, for the labor market, for the vast consumer bazaar, for superior military forces, and for national, regional and local prestige, the bible's realism about ecology and demography is generally ignored.

The Two Faces of Population Competition: Increase Your Own or Decrease Your Rival's

Population competition, the author reminds us, is not just about having more people of the right kind. It is at its deadliest when it strives to have fewer people of the wrong kind, driving out or slowing the growth of unwanted populations. Competitive breeding is an expression of population competition that takes the form of either offensive or defensive pronatalism. While Parsons is a materialist thinker, he is also an ethicist. He values human rights and human dignity, both of which he fears are grievously threatened by population competition.

The actions of population competitors to slow the growth or reduce the numbers of rival groups, he warns, lead to such extremes as: genocide (Armenians, Jews, Cambodians); expulsion (Kosovars, then Serbs, in Kosovo or French Acadians in British North America); immigration restrictions, including total prohibition of the immigration of unwanted populations, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and later the U.S. "Asian barred zone"; stimulated emigration (such as the "return" to Africa of freed US slaves); and eugenics, such as sterilization or stimulated contraception in unwanted populations.

Population competition is commonplace and ongoing. The most virulent cases now occur within less developed nations: Kosovo, East Timor, Rwanda, Burundi, Indonesia and Sudan. But western nations are not always above pressuring unwanted populations to fade away. European states still have subtle ways of encouraging their Gypsies ("Roma") to move on or use trade and aid concessions to get foreign minorities to stay home. Parsons regards the U.S. removal of more than one million Mexican illegal aliens annually as an ongoing expulsion, though an argument can be made that the term more properly applies to removal of established populations.

"Population competition is commonplace and ongoing. The most virulent cases now occur within less developed nations..."

Population Competition for Economic Growth and Prestige

Even more destructive for resources and the environment, and only sketchily addressed by Parsons, is the relentless population competition fostered by regional and local boosterism. Population growth remains the ultimate marker of success for most First World cities and states. Chronically depressed Detroit's great boast now is that its four-decade population decline has now reversed. Metropolitan areas in the United States consistently measure their population "progress" against competing cities of similar size.

Sizable and well-funded state and local bureaucracies exist to promote investment for "jobs," even if local labor is not there to fill them. Then those same bureaucracies, seek new sources of national and even international migrants to fill the new jobs. Iowa is embarrassed, not gratified, by its status as a near

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zero population growth state. Officials rejoiced that settlement of 15,000 foreign immigrants in 1998 had more than offset the out migration of 10,000 Iowans. Lt. Governor Sally Pederson in 1999 trumpeted the state's campaign to attract immigrants, including a one-stop assistance center and financial incentives. This sort of growth mania of localities and regions profoundly affects attitudes in Congress and the executive toward further expansion of immigration and the rigor of enforcement of existing immigration laws.

"Jack Parsons is at his most acerbic in exposing how governments, and private institutions in the West 'avoid, deny, distort, or even invent, demographic' evidence to sidestep awkward facts."

Warring Instincts on Reproduction

The author describes an important human paradox: the competing imperatives in all of us on one hand to reproduce prolifically, and on the other to prudently limit our progeny to match available resources. Traditional societies have accepted this imperative of balance most readily. Parsons finds third world nations more realistic about the links among population, resources and quality of life than are the "advanced" industrial countries. They openly acknowledge that population growth is a problem and create programs and policies to slow it down.

With exasperation, the author finds most developing countries lost in a "great fog of macro-irrationality," convinced that we can grow forever, or if not, some solution with turn up. Parsons sees the advanced nations, not the less developed, as the ones who believe in "cargo cult economics."

These two volumes do not want for historical and mythological examples of man's innate drive for number power, as well as his recognition of limits. Parsons is deft at producing the illustrative quotation from even the obscure corners of human thought. In Genesis, the most seductive promise Yahweh can give to Abraham is to make his progeny as numerous as the stars. The comfortably atheistic Parsons notes dourly that most aspects of modern religion attitudes toward sex, births and population appear to stem from "ancient, mindless and dysfunctional roots" such as these. Yet he points out that pronatalism seemingly inherent in Christianity did not emerge until the era of Thomas Aquinas. Such early Christian thinkers as Tertullian were proto-Malthusians.

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Third World Realism and First World Pro-populationism

Virtually all societies have had practices for keeping their numbers down to some notion of the right size. An earthy African blessing captures both the joys and dangers of reproduction: "May you have children . . . until their excrement buries you up to the neck." Parsons tells us that it is the shifting balance between these two human drives, shaped by a host of different influences, that largely determines the flow of births in a particular region at a particular time. Unfortunately, this reductionist approach could be applied to nearly all the choices made by human beings. The devil is in the details of the "different influences."

Jack Parsons is at his most acerbic in exposing how governments, and private institutions in the West "avoid, deny, distort, or even invent, demographic" evidence to sidestep awkward facts. In pulling this off, elites of Western nations are aided by a good deal of irrationality, innumeracy, contradiction and denial among their own populations.

The media, for example, which comes in for special blame, "doesn't seem to know or care about the difference between a million and a billion, between a birthrate and a growth rate, or between a percentage and absolute increase." Some examples of demographic "howlers" he picks up from people who

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should know better are:

- A 1994 reference by a presumed expert to the "94 million" babies born on earth that year, missing by a mile the 142 million actually born;
- solemn references to "negative birth rates" in such places as Italy, from which Parsons infers that "more babies than had been born disappeared back into Italian wombs!"
- a noted journalist's comparison of a 2.4 percent annual population growth rate (a doubling time of less than 30 years) with prevailing interest rates and dismissing it as a "mere bagatelle."

Cooking the Books on Numbers: 'Demosophistry'

"Demosophistry" is a Parsonian term for manipulative cooking of the books on numbers and peoples, such as the careful undercounting of immigration in western countries. Demosophistry is at work when the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) reported in 1999 about 650,000 immigrants to the United States in 1998. The one-third drop below the most likely number was made possible by a convenient technicality. INS had simply not been able to do the paper work on a few hundred thousand more newly admitted settlers. Neither does INS's annual "official number" ever include the nearly 300,000 additional illegal immigrants. It is the fallacious and more benign 650,000 number that becomes the center of the national debate. And those who claim higher number become alarmists, or worse.

"Somehow it has become out of bounds — even irreverent — to talk about numbers of human beings in discussions of public policy."

A distorted sense of ethics deserves some blame in avoiding unwelcome numbers, he claims, muddying and stifling the debate. Somehow it has become out of bounds — even irreverent — to talk about numbers of human beings in discussions of public policy. Here are some of the demosophistries faced by advocates of "equinatalism," as Parsons terms those who believe in balancing births and resources, when they try to talk about numbers. 1) Numbers do not matter, so they don't need to be discussed; 2) Numbers matter so much that they must not be discussed lest we offend and stir up strife; and 3) The mere idea of applying numbers to people is in itself anathema.

Conclusion: Why Do Some Groups *Not* Breed Competitively?

We know population competition when we see it. But evidence of competitive breeding is more elusive. Parsons makes a good theoretical case that competitive breeding occurs. But his work offers little empirical data establishing the fact or the importance of the competitive drive in birth decisions in different societies. Does such data even exist? If there are systematic surveys of reproduction motives in high fertility societies that buttress his theory, he does not mention them. Indeed, even if surveyed, would an expectant mother and father in a high-fertility environment be aware of a competitive urge as a factor among the many in their reproductive choices. And if so, how much weight would they would give it?

This reviewer is left wondering what the mechanism is by which the perception of threat or opportunity is instilled into the population of childbearing age and into their reproductive decisions? Is it a top-down process mediated by government and other institutions of social control? The record of recent history fails to show a close association in the West between fertility and the intensity of pronatalist exhortations by religious, business and political leaders?

Or is the commitment to competitive breeding a bottom-up phenomenon, a response of families to their own perceptions of the hostility or benignity of their environment? If fertility decisions, influenced by so many interacting factors as Parsons notes, how do we isolate and quantify competitive intent?

More ethnographic studies are needed in high fertility regions where competitive breeding is suspected or might be expected: Palestinian Arabs, Hispanics in the United States, Kosovars, Lebanese Christians and among what Parsons calls "the double minority" in Northern Ireland: Catholics who chafe

Biological + genetic inherited instinct!

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under their minority status within Ulster, and Ulster Protestants, who see themselves as a threatened minority within greater Ireland.

A better question might be: why don't we see even more indications of competitive breeding? Why don't we see it in many groups where you would reasonably expect it — groups that are politically or economically oppressed by regimes controlled by different ethnic groups, facing declining population shares, or isolated and outnumbered within a polity that is perceived as hostile?

"The map abounds with societies seemingly ripe for competitive breeding... Why has competitive breeding not been their strategy?"

The number of groups in the world who would appear to have reasons to breed competitively is considerable, if one counts both groups that are, or see themselves as, endangered minorities, and groups that might fear, justifiably or not, that their majority status is waning, such as non-Hispanic European-Americans. In California, where minority status looms for non-Hispanic whites, their unease has been forcefully expressed at the ballot box, but not in the bedroom.

Similarly, what can explain the clear failures of overtly sanctioned and subsidized competitive breeding, such as among whites in Apartheid South Africa, to make any significant demographic difference? What explains the demographic behavior of the Québécois, who had among the highest fertilities in the Western Hemisphere in the first half of the 20th century, but have let their fertility fall to among the lowest since then, even as Quebec's nationalism and sense of isolation within the Canadian union has burgeoned?

The map abounds with societies seemingly ripe for competitive breeding. Polynesian Fijians in Fiji sought to violently reshape their political system rather than surrender power to a more fecund East Indian majority. Why has competitive breeding not been their strategy? Subjected for decades to a colonial power, Fijians had little voice in the 19th century policy of robust East Indian immigration. But "defensive pronatalism" was a tactic open to them and they did not adopt it?

Similar questions might be asked about English-speaking Blacks in Trinidad, Guyana and Belize, who have lost or are losing their majority or plurality status to more fecund East Indians or Hispanics. The answer to this one should be of interest to immigration policy makers. The declining number-power of Blacks in those societies has been accompanied and reinforced by a strikingly high propensity to emigrate. What Parsons terms a "takeover" (demographic displacement) is occurring in textbook form in those societies, in turn generating high immigration to other nations.

Worth examining is whether there is a negative association between the education, secularism and modernity of a population and its propensity to breed competitively. Such populations are the most likely to have small families, the very condition that makes them poor contenders in the population competition and ultimately threatens them with the status of a shrinking and defensive minority. In short they are of the species the author calls "*homo contracipiens*," unwilling to change their ways and fated to be dominated and ultimately excluded by "*homo progenitivus.*"

We Must Change Human Instincts — But How?

The remedy Parsons offers for humankind's addiction to numbers is hardly more unexceptionable than to work for a change in the hearts and minds of men. True, human irrationality and ignorance about numbers must be combated with rational dialog, education and persuasion through democratic processes. Parson's book stands as a major resource in this struggle. But the task seems even more arduous when we realize the irrationality and ignorance on population is often most entrenched among groups who now claim a monopoly on rationality and enlightenment, such as those Parsons labels our "Kamikaze liberals." TSC

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Exponents, Extinction, and Invasive Species

Reconnecting 'oikos logos' and 'oikos nomos'

Book Review by Craig Straub

In his 84th year, the "Father of Human Ecology" has lofted another missile at well intentioned utopian efforts. This hand-crafted device contains a cognitive cure for a culture suffering from population myopia and is designed to stimulate the uninitiated about the implications of ignoring societal taboos. To the educators in the lecture halls, formulators of public policy, proponents of perpetual growth, mercenaries of the masses, and spineless up-and-comings, this is assigned reading. Organizations and individuals preaching from the gospel of posterity are provided the ability to dismantle the hysteria and misperceptions which emanate from issues related to population, economics, ecology, ethics, and culture.

The Ostrich Factor: Our Population Myopia
by Garrett Hardin
New York: Oxford University Press
153 pages, $22.00

This book is predicated on the analogy of the proverbial ostrich burying its head in the sand and society's denial of problems associated with human population growth. An infant burying its head in a blanket exhibits behavior called ostrichism. An adult indulges in the same behavior by burying his head in denial as a mechanism to escape further inquiry into the naked truth of an uncovered taboo. Advocates of continued population growth indicate that civilization will rapidly advance because more Shakespeares will be produced to solve humanity's problems. Hardin reveals that England today has 13 times more people than in Shakespeares' time and asks "And where are the thirteen Shakespeares?"

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As an ecologist and philosopher, the author revisits the thoughts of 3rd century Christian apologist Tertullian, who regarded pestilence, famines, and wars as blessings to overcrowded nations. Tertullian viewed the value of human and natural catastrophes as nature's responses to curb the rate of population increase to alleviate more suffering. From *DeAnima* Tertullian writes:

> *As our demands grow greater, our complaints against nature's inadequacy are heard by all. The scourges of pestilence, famine, wars, and earthquakes have come to be regarded as a blessing to overcrowded nations, since they serve to prune away the luxuriant growth of the human race.*

The expression "to prune away" refers to the agricultural practice of getting rid of superfluous living material for the sake of a better harvest. Hardin suggests that the practice of pruning must be incorporated into every population program to produce a policy of sustainablity.

Liebig's Law of the Minimum (Justus von Liebig) opens the discussion of limiting factors to growth. Liebig's Law states that "growth of a species is limited by whatever required nutrient is least available." For example, agriculture relies on nitrogen and oceans are experiencing a phosphorus shortage. To answer the question *How many people can the earth support?* is difficult unless the limiting factor is specified. A population which is only herbivorous can support 5 to 10 times more people with the assistance of photosynthesis. Regarding energy capture, solar energy will support a larger population if space heating and cooling are eliminated. Posing the question "How many people?" implies the desire to

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maximize the number of people in the world. Many religious fundamentalists contend that Genesis 1:28 ("be fruitful and multiply") is a commandment to maximize the size of the human population. Hardin indicates that the words of Genesis were addressed to a small human population who could not fathom the consequences of a multi-billion population infested with the habitual practice of seeking the maximum.

The terms shortage and longage provide an understanding of the traditional differences between ecologists and economists. Shortage provides justification to expand infrastructure and profit; Longage implies the need to trim growth. The default position of ecology is based on the conservation principle that "we can never merely do one thing." By contrast, economics maintains that we have a limitless world. Officially a conservative discipline, economics has been contaminated with obstructive empiricism (ignoring conflicting data). The obstructive empiricist promotes perpetual growth which is accepted as a form of optimism. Ecologists are viewed as pessimists and are often detested by economists for revealing the unanticipated consequences of ignoring the complexities of the world. In response to the imbalance between supply and demand, economics offers higher prices by increasing the supply. Ecologists recognize that when dealing with problems of human need, a shortage cannot be cured by increasing the supply. Such an approach encourages production of more people and greater demand. In response to the bifurcation of ecology and economics the newly emerging discipline of ecological economics has been formed to discriminate among limitless demands in a world of limited resources.

Economics has recognized the importance of economies of scale, the notion of gaining economies by producing more of some product. For example, the production of more automobiles per year reduces the cost of each car because the cost of the machinery is divided among more units produced. However, the increase of transportation results in diseconomies of scale by increasing commute time, higher cost for higher capacity roads, and smaller residential lots resulting in displacement of home gardening and more trips to the store. Ecology has acknowledged the economies and diseconomies of scale of generation and extinction. The growth of organisms are subject to limitations and stop when their genetically programmed maximum is reached. Every growth phenomenon exhibits economies of scale in the early stages and will meet barriers of diseconomies of scale, which will halt growth or extinguish the structure. Hardin concludes that the acceptance of a limited world will be one of the most difficult tasks for our species. The intermediate costs will be high and the reward will be survival.

"...ecological economics has been formed to discriminate among limitless demands in a world of limited resources."

The humanist champion reveals the ethics involved in distinguishing the controversial ideas of evolution and natural selection. Evolution is an historical idea referring to the past and natural selection is a scientific idea referring to the future. Motivational ethics is concerned with interpretation of the past and implies that an assertion about the past dictates a choice of action in the future. Consequentialist ethics is concerned with future consequences of present acts. Dispute over creation in a few days or over millions of years is to engage in historically accurate motivational ethics. Consequentialist ethics is interested in altering the future and supporting the idea of natural selection: a consequence following the consistent ability of various species to reproduce in a competitive world of limited capacity.

Two examples from the animal kingdom illustrate the principles of consequentialist ethics. The European Swift's inherited behavior equips the mother bird to raise a clutch or dispose of them in response to inadequate food supply (lack of insects during cool weather). More offspring can be produced if the eggs subjected to cool climate conditions are liquidated. Self-sacrifice is displayed by a species of cricket. The mother cricket lays many eggs and offers herself as the first meal to increase the probability of her babies'

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survival. Natural selection unifies the contradictory behaviors and invests in success. The behavior of the swift and cricket have the same consequences of furthering future generations. The cricket's behavior is a close parallel to human parenting. Mothers in particular become self-less to provide their children a firm foundation for life's journey.

Hardin eloquently handles the hot potatoes of affirmative action and multiculturalism. The distinction between equity and equality is discussed to better understand the concept of affirmative action. The Declaration of Independence states that "all men are created equal." The default position of biology is that *no two human beings are created equal*, as displayed by differing physical attributes of identical twins. Hardin believes that when Jefferson was addressing equality in the Declaration of Independence he meant that "every man should be equal under the law." Equality is a balance on both sides of the equal sign, whereas, equity does not imply equivalence but suggests fairness. George Mason drafted the Declaration of Rights for Virginia in late spring 1776 and wrote: *all men are born equally free and independent.* All babies are equal in their dependence on caretakers. Hardin indicates that Mason was making a statement about **equity** which Jefferson twisted into a misinterpretation of **equality**. Affirmative action was intended to fit the ability of the applicant to the demands of the position. However, the practice has been to equate the proportion of hires to the proportion of the identifiable group in the population, achieving equity and ignoring quality.

"...the ready adoption of multi-culturalism is based on a serious misunderstanding of culture."

Multiculturalism presumes peaceful coexistence of many cultures within the boundaries of the same nation. Examples of multiculturalism from USSR, the Baltics, and Central Africa have resulted in violence generated by chaos. Hardin suggests the ready adoption of multiculturalism is based on a serious misunderstanding of culture. The definition of culture by 19th century anthropologists: "the activities of a society — that is, of its members — constitute its culture" was intended to enlarge sympathy for daily rituals around the globe. The consequences of multiculturalism are much different when many cultures are placed within a single nation (intranational multiculturalism) rather than between nations (international multiculturalism). The unity and strength of a nation depends on maintaining the dominance of law-supported discriminations. To achieve world peace, spatially separated countries must obey different ethical mandates. A nation selecting to forbid genital laceration of young girls cannot tolerate internal diversity. Intranational multiculturalism creates chaos and destroys national peace. By contrast, international multiculturalism can promote peace in the short term and still provide appreciation of culture through personal visits and information exchange.

In the closing chapter, Hardin advises the youth to explore Rowland's dark world. F. Sherwood Rowland of the University of California at Irvine discovered that chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were destroying the ozone layer, allowing more ultraviolet light to penetrate to Earth. For fourteen years after Rowland's discovery no graduate students outside the University of California system applied to work with him. The trend increased only after a large research contract was granted and after receiving the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995. Rowland indicates the cause of delay was the discovery of facts which did not improve the human situation of the world. Rowland addresses the young worker who is hoping to make a reputation in a crowded field: "Don't look under the light. Go out into the darkness." Hardin completes his advice by adding that the dark corners contain the greatest possibilities for discovering reforms capable of improving the human condition. More knowledge is required about population-linked cultural habits. Painful experiences will be required to banish humanity's illusion of perpetual growth in a world of infinite resources. When the subtle world of Rowland's dark area becomes the world of the young, we will make real progress in optimizing the quality of life on Earth. TSC

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Quotable Hardinisms from *The Ostrich Factor*

Compiled by Craig Straub

As far as the urbanites are concerned, milk comes in waxy cartons; capons and steers are such a great mystery they are seldom named. (p.14)

Earthly language serves two contradictory purposes: to facilitate thought and to prevent it. (p.19)

He (Tertullian) realized that whenever a community consists of too many people for the resources available to it, heavy mortality can then actually improve the conditions of life for the lucky survivors. (p.22)

Simon (Julian) really should have taken an elementary math course before he said anything about the consequences of the human population. (p.35)

We can't cure a shortage by increasing the supply. (p.39)

Dipping into the great bulk of economic analysis, you soon discover that environment is usually no more than a ghost in the woodwork. (p.40)

We see only what we have names for. (p.41)

Every proposal to build a dam, to widen a highway, to cut down another forest, to turn wetlands into salable real estate, or to bury unwanted waste products is sure to have unintended consequences.... (p.41)

From now on, we must accept responsibility for all unintended consequences while doing our best to predict them in advance... (p.42)

Extremism appears to lead to clear-cut decisions, whereas moderation embarrasses us by emphasizing problems that are yet to be solved. (p.42)

The more successful a continuously growing population is in extracting wealth from nature-the-resource, the sooner it will suffer from the intransigence of the unintended creation, nature-the-sink. (p.43)

Thus, in figurative language intended for children, Kingsley (Reverend Charles) hinted that God may not have given us a ready-made world, as described in Chapter 1 of Genesis; rather, his primary gift was the process of natural selection, which, given enough time, could - and did, and still does - put together the incredibly complex and beautiful world we live in. (p.59-60)

The reward determines the outcome. (p. 61)

Money is both the kind word and the gun. If the firepower is not great enough to persuade the targeted person, increase the offer. (p.74)

All persuasion takes place through coercion. (p.76)

Intuitively, it should be obvious that the ability to escape society's punishment is directly related to the density of the community's population. (p.77)

To condemn the coercion of the individual by the group is to reject democracy. (p.78)

With no sign of cessation of population growth, diseconomies of scale are sure to become a "growth industry." (p.80)

The maximum is not the optimum. (p.82)

But life will never be satisfactory so long as Madam Ostrich, put in charge of the human household, is allowed to sweep problems under a sandy rug. (p.82)

"Sustainable growth" is an oxymoron. (p.86)

.... sustainable development can be defended because an adult can continue to develop his or her intelligence without any growth in body weight. (p.86)

One world cannot endure - not in a universe programmed by natural selection. (p.96)

And remember the competitive exclusion principle: if fertility varies in a population that is offered options in fertility, then as generations succeed one another, the pronatalist elements in the population will, in time, displace the ones who conscientiously limit their fertility. (p.105)

Propaganda in favor of reducing fertility must be accompanied by repressive legal measures. (p. 106)

... equity is determinable by law and custom; equality is determined by nature. (p.114)

Multiculturalists, in effect, urge that we eat borscht with chopsticks. (p.122)

... affirmative action implies that if we cannot guarantee equality, then we should legislate equity. (p.128)

Immigrant labor pauperizes domestic labor. (p.138)

... apparently it is easier for the media to photograph scenes that suggest the suffering of new immigrants than it is to prove, photographically, that widely dispersed job losses have a common cause. (p.138)

Low standards of living drive out high standards. (p.149)

But does God give a prize for the maximum number of people? Such a God cannot be the Einstein's God. If such is now the God of Christian sects, they are putting their money on the wrong horse. (p.150)

If He (God) is concerned at all with our well-being, it is hard for a thinking human being to believe that He would work only in the light. (p.152)

The big difficulties, worthy of the attention of God worshipers, are in the dark now, in the area that, after many centuries of being neglected, promises to make human life more enjoyable. (p.152)

Knowledge alone will not move nations: astonishing and unforeseen events will be required for humanity's education. (p.152) TSC

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Breaking the Barriers

Book Review by John F. Rohe

This book was ten years in the making. It is about barriers. Not physical barriers. Not gates or fences. It's about the imperceptible barriers within and between us. So while it is not about stone walls, it has much to do with stonewalling.

Invisible Walls is subtitled "Why we ignore the damage we inflict on the planet ... and ourselves." The adverse effects of our technology often loom far beyond our perceptive abilities.

Why do well intentioned folk act in seemingly counter-intuitive ways toward our successors? Why do we respond to threats of global warming by demanding larger gas guzzling SUV's? Why do our zoning laws become the template for low density, land consumptive, auto-dependent, urban sprawl? Why must our economic policies be based on growth, and more growth, when no one would reasonably claim a finite planet can accommodate perpetual exponential growth? Why do we shrink from population policies when no one truly believes the earth can continue to support more people (presently the net gain is 230,000 people per day)? Why do we stock pile more nuclear waste, when there is no known plan for safe disposal? Why do we adopt policies explicitly against the interests of our children and grandchildren?

Invisible Walls
by Peter Seidel
New York:
Prometheus Books
333 pages, $32.95

Might these policies be the handmaidens of a mean-spirited, heartless plot against our children? Or are they just the actions of a misguided, albeit well-intentioned, ideology on the other side of our Invisible Walls?

The author, Peter Seidel, would seem to lean toward the latter, although in some cases he tends to believe the truth resides somewhere in between. Seidel labels certain beliefs, such as the notion that "guns don't kill, people do," as "willful blindness." As to other beliefs, Mr. Seidel adopts a more conciliatory attitude. Our ideologies, our educational systems, and our media reinforce attitudes and beliefs on a daily basis. These beliefs are often unexamined. And they operate against the future.

The thesis progresses from ourselves, to our social life, and then to our organizations. The book fashions a set of solutions. It sets forth a framework to analyze the root cause of our harmful activity.

Invisible Walls is organized in four parts. In Part I, entitled "Our Ancient Brain," the author identifies limitations in our ability to comprehend the future. Perceptions distort reality. Moreover, our instinctive and "ever-compelling primary drives" tend to ignore environmental casualties.

Part II is entitled "Our Modern Society." Through specialization, we cultivate a narrow focus, and thus fail to account for casualties beyond our purview, along the path of our so-called "progress." The author carefully weaves ethics and values into Part II.

In Part III, the author looks at our "Organizations." In setting the stage, Seidel points out that "in human society, structured organizations are needed to enable people to do the things they cannot do as individuals or informal groups. Although essential for a civilized society, organizations, in pursuing their interests, often come in conflict with each other and endanger the welfare of our species and the planet."

And finally, in Part IV, Seidel discusses possible "Solutions." Here the author summons an insight into the effect of our actions. Solutions are going to require a more panoramic education and a deeper insight into

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the potential for harm. He builds an ethical framework on which to construct the solutions.

The reader might wonder why Mr. Seidel, the architect, would undertake the ten-year study to write this book. Might he be responding to a client's rejection of environmentally sound architectural suggestions? When prudent recommendations are declined, this architect might not be content to just fashion a building to the owner's needs. He also "designs" an outline to diagnose the more deep-rooted problem.

A recurring theme in Seidel's diagnosis is reminiscent of C.P. Snow's *Two Cultures*, and Edward O. Wilson's *Consilience,* as he points to our inability to comprehend the whole. We become specialists in our chosen endeavor. "It is far easier to become a successful expert than a competent generalist. All of this encourages us to become a society of individuals who are narrowly trained, each pulling on his own oar with no idea where he is headed." (p.128.)

Valuable quotations from venerable authorities blend with the author's down-to-earth, plain-English gems in this book. For example, in Seidel's words: "Our brains are proving to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they have brought us many wonderful things, such as bread, cars, airplanes, penicillin, air-conditioners and literature. On the other hand, they have given us weapons with which we can destroy each other many times over and has started a process that is rapidly eroding the earth's ability to support life." (p.303.) *Invisible Walls* is a timeless study of our most cherished — albeit destructive — beliefs.

This long-awaited, well-researched and thought-provoking book merits attention as it diagnoses our routinely harmful, yet unexamined, convictions. As unsuspecting minions, we harbor, protect and promote these convictions.

If you seek a book with the literary elegance of Rachel Carson, then stick with Rachel. No current authors will compare (Mr. Seidel included). But if you seek an insightful, down-to-earth study of ourselves, and our destructive habits, you can find it here.

The magnitude of Mr. Seidel's solutions yields an insight into just how formidable our task will be. Thus, he aptly concludes with this poignant admonition: "get to work."

TSC

Ethnic Loyalty is OK, But Not Too Much

Book Review by Leon Bouvier

In this well-written and concise report. sociologist Alan Wolfe interviews middle-class Americans about their views on numerous issues — relevant to the American "common good." Chapter I discusses his methodology. To a retired sociologist like this reviewer, it was a joy to see how Wolfe anguished over how best to arrive at a meaningful representative sample of the American people. He decided to limit his interviews to the middle class and to limit it to suburban dweller. As he writes (p.21): "My choices were designed to test the hypothesis that middle-class Americans no longer share a common world view but are bitterly divided into traditionalist and modernist wings." Wolfe selected eight suburbs from Brookline, Massachusetts, to Rancho Bernardo, California. He interviewed 200 respondents, or

One Nation, After All: What Middle-Class Americans Really Think About
by Alan Wolfe
New York: Penguin Books
358 pages, $13.95 paperback

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twenty-five in each suburb. In each community, random samples were compiled and residents were sent a letter explaining the project and requesting an interview. The response rate was about 25 percent. Does this sample truly represent the areas or are certain types of people more likely to cooperate than others? Wolfe also discusses the two basic approaches that social scientists use when gathering data — questionnaire surveys or in-depth personal interviews, such as in the Middletown studies. Wolfe does include a brief survey, but concentrates mostly on person-to-person interviews.

What does Wolfe and his group of interviewers [we are never told how many researchers are involved] ask of his respondents? To cite from the cover page: "God, country, family, racism, welfare, immigration, homosexuality, work, the Right, the Left, and each other." The author is adept at quoting his interviewees. One wonders if these were taped. But they prove to be interesting reading and they illustrate how different, as well as similar, many suburban Americans are in their views on society. Since this journal is primarily concerned with matters dealing with population, immigration and cultural adaptation, I will concentrate on those portions of Wolfe's book that deal with such matters.

It is Wolfe's approach to first discuss the subject, often citing other research and usually explaining both sides of the issue if such exists. For example, regarding multiculturalism, Wolfe points out that: "In the way multiculturalism has been debated in America ... it appears to pit two important principles against each other: American respect for tolerance and pluralism suggests that we ought to welcome cultures from all over the world, while American ideals of loyalty and patriotism suggest that such differences should be blended into support for America and its way of life." (p.154) Interestingly, the respondents were strongly opposed to multiculturalism if that meant bilingualism. "Americans place great store on English as the language of the country." (p.154) Wolfe concludes that Americans do believe in what he calls "benign multiculturalism." They want the newest immigrants to be able to express their diversity, but they also want them to move toward a 'post-ethnic' perspective. Or as one of the respondents so clearly enunciated" (p.157) "[Americans] support the principle that groups in the United States ought to be allowed to retain their distinctiveness, but only so long as they do so within an official culture that insists on the priority of the national community over subnational ethnic groups." This reflects this reviewer's position that "pluralistic assimilation" may be the answer to the recent shifts in our racial composition, a point that Wolfe neglects to discuss.

The chapter dealing with immigration is one of the weaker sections of the book. Wolfe is not always correct in his own statements on this topic. On page 134: "Immigration ... is anything but a new phenomenon; previous periods of American history, especially the decades around the turn of this century, witnessed far more migration to the United States than the present one." This is false. The past 10 to 15 years have seen a larger number of immigrants than ever in the nation's history.

"Wolfe finds that his subjects are overwhelmingly opposed to illegal immigration. However, more feel that the doors should remain open rather than be shut to legal immigrants."

Wolfe finds that his subjects are overwhelmingly opposed to illegal immigration. However, more feel that the doors should remain open rather than be shut to legal immigrants. Wolfe states that: "Without some borders in place, it is not clear that there is a distinctive country to which Americans can pledge their loyalty. But without some immigration, the America that people have known and respected would no longer exist." (p.137) I have no idea what this means! Regarding illegal movements, many respondents blame not the immigrants, but the employers who hire them. As one said: "Make it illegal to hire them." (p.148) But it is illegal to hire them!

Wolfe does not discuss population growth. On numerous occasions, comments from the surveys

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strongly suggest that people are concerned about population size, or at least urban sprawl. Wolfe never follows up on these comments. Increasingly, Americans are beginning to discover overpopulation. It would have been interesting to learn how this sample of suburbanites feels about such growth.

So much for the demographic aspects of this interesting publication. Wolfe is a well-respected sociologist and cites numerous sociological works (classic as well as more recent). Given that this is a community study, I was surprised that he did not refer to Tonnies' famous distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesselschaft*, or even more appropriately, Canadian sociologist Anthony Richmond's updating of that concept with *verbindungschnetschaft*, or "post-industrial society." The latter is most fitting to the communities being studied by Wolfe. In one chapter, the author refers to the Durkheimian concept of "sacred" and "profane," without ever explaining what is meant by profane. I suspect that most readers, unfamiliar with Emile Durkheim, wonder what profane really means in the present context.

These comments should not take away from Wolfe's excellent research. He has used a very innovative method in an attempt to answer questions about modern-day America. Furthermore, he tries (successfully in my judgment) to be objective. When appropriate he makes clear what his personal views are. He is to be congratulated for that.

I reserve my most critical comments for the editor of this book. It was simply not thoroughly edited and contains too many spelling errors (typos!) One example is simply indefensible. On page 263 a dark print sub-heading reads, **No Moral Heros**. No, this is not about the sandwich! More important is the question of footnote (or the lack thereof). Wolfe is fond of citing surveys (other than his own). That is good. But as I read chapter after chapter, I wondered where the reference was to these surveys. *There is not a single footnote or endnote in the entire book*! However, I eventually discovered (after reading about 200 pages) that references and comments are located at the end of the book, and they are numerous. How does the reader know when to look at the back of the book? He doesn't. I am aware that recent books have adopted new versions of footnoting. But this method goes way beyond reason. I long for the bygone days when footnotes were at the bottom of each page. As a respected scholar, Wolfe should have objected to this editing style. But the publisher is the boss!

Without question *One Nation, After All* is well worth reading. It provides us with a new adaptation of the traditional methods of sociological research. It is well written and interesting throughout. However, I must warn the prospective reader to check the "Notes" beginning on page 324 before you begin each chapter. TSC

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Too Many (Older) Americans?

Numbers of seniors and numbers of dollars

by Lincoln H. Day

Peter G. Peterson, banker, chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Institute for International Economics, director of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, co-founder of The Concord Coalition, advisor to Presidents from Nixon to Clinton, and former Secretary of Commerce (1972-3) is no one-dimensional zealot. He recognizes the existence of such "great hazards" as the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons; extreme global climate change; and the "financial, economic, and political aftershocks of globalization."

Yet, on the (rather surprising) contention that they will possibly do more "to reshape our collective future" than any of these others, he chooses to focus, here, on the hazards he sees inhering in demographic "graying" — current and anticipated increases in the numbers and, especially, the proportions of old people in national populations in consequence of: marked recent increases in life expectancy (particularly at the upper ages in developed countries, and at the lower ages in developing countries), marked recent declines in fertility (even to below-replacement levels in developed countries), and, in developed countries, the aging of those swollen "baby boom" cohorts born in the first 0 to 15 years after World War I.

Gray Dawn: How the Coming Age Wave Will Transform America — and the World
by Peter G. Peterson
New York: Times Books, a division of Random House
280 pages, $23.00

Peterson shows a good awareness of demographic principles and processes, and not a little sociological insight, as well. Compared with that of the general run of economists so often heard from on these matters, his perspective is broad and long-term; compared with that of ecologists, however, it is somewhat narrow and short-term.

Peterson's focus is on the money. As he describes it, the nature of the graying threat is essentially fiscal: there will not be enough money to pay for the old age pensions and medical care people have been promised or led to expect. The cause of this threat — apart from population aging — is inappropriate public policies: policies formulated for the most part when the proportions surviving to advanced old age were far smaller, expectations about levels of living were substantially lower, and medical knowledge and technique were less advanced and considerably less expensive than they now are. Not only have these policies failed to keep up with changing conditions, but, despite claims to the contrary, they — everywhere, according to Peterson — operate essentially on a "pay-as-you-go" basis: the trust funds purportedly underwriting them consist largely of "unbacked claims on future tax revenue," while their solvency depends on being able to continue taxing younger people to pay the costs entailed in providing for older people. The relevance of aging in this is that declines in the proportion of younger people relative

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to older people decreases the pool of those who can be taxed to pay these costs.

Focusing on the money can bring some useful insights (some of Peterson's specific policy recommendations are very much to the point), but is can also result in a narrowing of vision. Peterson is no "environmentalist." He evinces little concern about either overall population growth itself or the pressures on finite resources and the ability to maintain

"...the public must pay more than it does now for its pension and health coverage ... [however] there is to be no ... realignment of government priorities."

ecological sustainability arising out of the combination of population growth and rising levels of consumption and waste creation. Despite an emphasis on the future, he evinces no concern about the likely consequences — for both "developed" and "developing" countries — of rising levels of material aspiration. Nor, though he is doubtless aware of it, does he mention the ultimate necessity of halting population growth, or the fact that the graying he is so concerned about is the inevitable result of a great human achievement: the extension of control over mortality and fertility.

Nor is he a boat-rocker. Apart from those involving welfare, present budgetary priorities go unquestioned: NASA, the "war on drugs," the massive subsidies to the oil, automotive, construction, and real estate industries, for example. As for the military, he, at least twice, specifically expresses concern that the mammoth expenditures on this item might not yet be high enough. (At least he calls for paying off the national debt — which, be it noted, was mostly militarily-incurred.) Because of graying, the public must pay more than it does now for its pension and health coverage, and there is to be no seeking of a lessening of this additional burden in some realignment of government priorities.

Peterson supports his argument with statistics. The book is full of them. Most are from sources like the UN, OECD, and the U.S. Census Bureau — often channeled to Peterson via various secondary sources ranging from scholarly books and journals to newspapers. These statistics make interesting, if not always comforting, reading. Here is a sampling:

1. "Today the ratio of working taxpayers to non-working pensioners is around 5 to 1. By 2030, absent reform, this ratio will fall to 1.5 to 1 — and in some countries, such as Germany and Italy, it will drop all the way down to 1 to 1, or even lower."

2. "Over the next thirty years, global life expectancy is projected to rise by another seven or eight years. This advance alone will raise the number of elderly by roughly one-third."

3. "Over the next fifty years, while the number of people aged 65 to 84 is projected to triple, the number of those aged 85 and over is projected to grow sixfold. In the United States, these old old consume twice as much hospital care per capita — and over twenty times as much nursing-home care — as elders between ages 65-74."

4. "By the year 2050, all the developed countries will likely shrink from 15 to 10 percent of the world population — while the Mideast, Central Asia, Africa, and Latin America will climb from 48 to 60 percent."

5. "Early in the next century, many developed countries will have more grandparents than grandchildren."

6. By 2050, the number of Chinese age 65 and over is projected to reach 330 million (equal to the total that age in the entire world in 1990).

Peterson admits that, from the standpoint of fears about population aging, his statistics almost always present a worst-case scenario — with, e.g.: fertility continuing at well below replacement levels, upper age longevity rising to levels far beyond anything known today, and medical and long-term care costs continuing to soar.

Preparing for the worst is often a prudent course. ("Let us arrange our affairs as if the coming age wave is a profound challenge," Peterson commonsensically writes. "If we are wrong ... no great harm will have been done, and we will probably leave behind a better

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world for posterity.") But it isn't amiss to inquire about the definitions underlying such a scenario and the likelihood of the scenario's taking place.

For example, old age for Peterson commences at age 65: not an unreasonable assumption given the importance of that landmark as the customary pension eligibility age. But the argumentative force of statistics on aging would be lessened if, in recognition of the marked changes in longevity that have occurred recently in industrialized societies, old age were defined, instead, as beginning at, say, the age at which remaining years of life expectancy equaled 10. Peterson, himself, recognizes this fact in proposing that the pension eligibility age be gradually raised to 70 and from there to still higher levels on the basis of increases in longevity. But in his statistics he persists in defining old age as commencing at 65.

Or take "support" and "dependency," which Peterson defines almost wholly in economic terms: people paying taxes vs. people receiving pensions and other benefits paid for by these taxes. Only obliquely does he admit that old people might not be quite as dependent as he suggests, let alone that they might actually be providing a good deal of support to others, both "dependents" and "non-dependents" — sometimes in the form of money, more often by way of care-giving and the provision of emotional support.

As for the likelihood of his scenario, Peterson is aware that things can change. And he knows about demographic momentum: correctly pointing out, for example, that old people for the next 65 years are already here. He is less than forthcoming, however, about noting that a significant component of the aging trend he describes — that arising from the post-WWII "baby boom" — is temporary.

As for mortality, Peterson is within his rights to criticize the Social Security Administration's working projections of only modest future increases in longevity (citing cancer research in support of this criticism). But he is on slippery ground in accepting the markedly upward longevity projections made by a handful of demographers and economists that seem to consist of little more than straight-line projections of recent trends, and to have been calculated without considering such countervailing possibilities as: heightened virulence of infective organisms, declines in the effectiveness of current means of prevention or cure, the possible advent of new diseases, increased exposure to disease, and general deterioration of the environment.

As for fertility, despite more than 50 years' research, demographers are still at a loss to account for different patterns of childbearing — especially, as is increasingly becoming the case, where fertility is subject to a large measure of direct control. Birth rates might well remain low, but they could also go back up, thereby lessening the extent of graying.

"Only obliquely does [Peterson] admit that old people might not be quite as dependent as he suggests, let alone that they might actually be providing a good deal of support to others..."

But even if Peterson's statistics make the situation appear worse than it might actually be, there is no denying that aging will present problems, and that it is taking place on a global scale — most especially in the developed countries, where the transfer of provision for aging from private to public means has proceeded furthest. So what can we do about it?

Peterson mentions some consequences global aging will have on family structure, but as already noted, the problem, as he sees it, is essentially a fiscal one, and it is fiscal conditions that he addresses. What might be done to enable these larger numbers and proportions of old people to look after themselves more effectively; to enable them to live lives of dignity and reasonable comfort as participant, respected members of society; or how, at all levels of society, we might further develop those elements of personality and lifestyle, of social organization, of physical layout and functioning that are associated with being both able to cope oneself and willing and able to render assistance and comfort to others — are matters outside his purview.

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Peterson contends that the first task of developed countries is to "confront the truth" that "their pay-as-you-go entitlements cannot survive the coming age wave" and "the generosity of these entitlements must be greatly reduced." He sees no easy choices: "Everything will have to be on the table: from retirement age hikes and COLA (cost of living adjustments) cuts to new benefit formulas and universal means-testing. Health technology will have to be rationed, health budgets capitated, or health insurance voucherized."

"...the first task of developed countries is to 'confront the truth' that 'their pay-as-you-go entitlements cannot survive the coming age wave' and 'the generosity of these entitlements must be greatly reduced.'"

He begins by ably dismissing a number of the possibilities that have been suggested: Faster economic growth he plausibly defines as a "hoax." Even were it to take place (and Peterson thinks it might not), it could not occur fast enough. Allowing workers to invest their current contributions in the stock market he (again plausibly) terms a "free-lunch fallacy," inherently both illogical and irrational. Spending less on doctors misses the main forces driving health costs upwards, namely, people's rising aspirations and such medical advances as new methods of diagnosis, new drugs, and new surgical procedures. *Relying on declines in youth dependency to counterbalance increases in age dependency* overlooks the fact that the latter is far more costly to public budgets; and also that money spent on senior benefits is "essentially pure consumption, while money spent on children is "an investment." Because, in Peterson's view, no country's present pension system is adequately funded, simply doing nothing is "not a realistic choice," either. It would be "economically ruinous" for any one country, and "impossible" for the developed world as a whole. Raising taxes would help, but, in Peterson's view, most developed countries (with the possible exceptions of Japan and the U.S.) are already "at or beyond their threshold of efficient taxation." Inflation won't work because it ends up destroying social trust and ruining the economy, and, even as a "short-term palliative" would not work in developed countries because their public pension benefits are indexed to the price level.

His recommendations are several:

(a) Encourage workers to continue working (and, therefore, paying taxes), mainly by gradually raising the normal retirement age to 70 and indexing it to longevity increases thereafter. This illustrates the emphasis Peterson puts on fiscal aspects of the issue. It also begs such questions as whether an older person is able to work or get a job, or whether what he or she might now be doing (e.g., caring for an aged spouse, providing daycare for the children of a self-supporting divorced daughter) is of greater social (or even fiscal) significance than the taxes that might be paid. Nonetheless, in a detailed and comprehensive discussion, Peterson persuasively argues that much could be gained by at least removing some of the present encouragements to early retirement (especially in Europe).

(b) Increase the size of the working-age labor force. There are two general approaches to this: Increasing labor force participation and increasing the population of working age. The first would be accomplished by encouraging and enabling more women to work and by removing such discouragements to working as disability, unemployment, and welfare programs that (especially in Europe) "offer generous benefits but few incentives to find new jobs." He would also remove national policies that reduce the number of hours in the work week.

The second — immigration — is another matter, and Peterson recognizes that fact. After enumerating the respective costs and benefits, and noting the complexity of the issue and the competing interests in play, he concludes that "...the biggest problem with higher immigration as an aging strategy lies in the numbers ... [I]mmigration would have to double,

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triple, and even quadruple over today's levels — and remain at these higher levels permanently — to sizably reduce the fiscal burden of aging. This would be wrenching for any society, but ... especially traumatic for host populations that are no longer reproducing themselves, since even a small influx will cause the foreign-born to grow rapidly as a share of the labor force."

(c) Raise more — and more productive — children. There are no limits in Peterson's philosophy. He is, however, aware that pronatalist policies have been notably unsuccessful, and that they raise many questions about privacy and civil liberties. His choice — while admitting that the demographic returns will not be immediate — is to make children more productive. He puts particular emphasis on those "societies that have been hit hardest by changes in family structure and that have the weakest traditions of public involvement in child welfare ... the English-speaking countries in general and the United States in particular — that affluent superpower whose youth indicators on infant mortality, poverty, nutrition, functional illiteracy, math and science test scores, drugs, and crime often define the outer edge of pathology for the developed world."

"...the biggest problem with higher immigration as an aging strategy lies in the numbers... Immigration would have to double, triple, and even quadruple over today's levels..."

(d) Stress filial obligation so as to be able to rely more on children to help support their parents. The means Peterson proposes to this end for Western societies are "creating and expanding tax incentives and social services (like respite care and assisted home care) that help hard-pressed working families tend to the needs of their frail parents.

(e) Target benefits on the basis of financial need. This could be done by, e.g., imposing a comprehensive means test on all retirement benefits, lifting the caps on payroll taxes, eliminating cost-of-living adjustments above some minimum benefit, or making benefits fully taxable.

(f) Require people to save for their own old age by substituting fully funded private programs outside government reach for the current, in Peterson's view, essentially unfunded pay-as-you-go programs from which governments have taken funds for other than pension uses. These fully funded programs would be compulsory for all but the self-employed, closely regulated by government, and shored up by a minimum safety net provided out of taxation. During the transition to a genuinely funded system, the economy as a whole would have "to save more and consume less" because workers would be funding their own retirements while simultaneously continuing to pay for their parents' retirements and closing the fiscal gap in the existing system. As the transition progressed — and it could take place slowly or rapidly — they would eventually be paying only for their own retirements. In Peterson's view, "transitioning to a funded and mandatory system of personal retirement accounts is probably the most essential strategy of all." Certainly it is necessary to have a higher rate of saving and full funding — for all the reasons Peterson mentions. But one worries that, with a private system, too much would depend on having a sound private economy, and too much be lost to administrative costs and inefficiencies associated with private profit-making. And what might be the effects on inequalities of wealth: would a private, profit-making system maintain, increase, or decrease them?

Most of Peterson's proposals would be parts of any rational well-administered program, government or non-government. As Peterson contends, the essential element is maintaining full-funding. My own guess, however, is that (Peterson possibly to the contrary) this can be ensured more readily — and at less cost and greater possibility for social gain — by a stable democratic government than by a plethora of private profit-making institutions. TSC

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How the West Can Help in World's 'Danger Zones'

Book Review by Mark Wegierski

The decisive restraint on inhuman practices on the battlefield lies within the warrior himself, in his conception of what is honorable and dishonorable for a man to do with weapons.

This subtle and intricate series of essays constitutes a halfway-house between internationalist, liberal optimism, and the pronounced realism or pessimism of the conservative view of human nature and problems.

Michael Ignatieff is a renowned young scholar and writer. His earlier book, *Blood and Belonging* (reviewed in *The Social Contract*, vol. IV, no. 3, Spring 1994, pp. 223-225) looked at similar topics. Ignatieff tries to arrive at a useful framework for strategies of intervention by the West into the non-Western world, particularly those inflamed "zones of danger" (endemic warfare, famine, etc.). He makes many useful observations: that an intact authoritarian state is generally preferable to the complete breakdown of social order; that the traditional code of the warrior is perhaps the best hope of reining in indiscriminate terror; and that humanitarian interventions into the non-West must be well-thought-out to have any real impact. He also avers that some situations are virtually intractable, and low-level aid is perhaps then the only type which can meaningfully be offered.

Ignatieff also shares the conservative sense of foreboding as to where the current-day world is headed. He expresses trepidation about the unbelievable disassociation between, on the one hand, the "twenty-four-hour global trading economy" centered on a few large, viable cities, and much of the rest of the planet, which seems to be sliding into a twilight zone of irregular conflict and ecological catastrophe.

However, Ignatieff's embrace of human rights thinking, and of an abstract liberal individualism (which he is at least honest enough to admit is a very recent innovation) is made in a kind of vacuum as to what is actually going on in the West today. He seems to argue that the idea of equality in the court of law can be seen as the basis for current policies of hyper-equalitarian leveling and redistribution. This idea of equality before and under the law is, today, the conservative position. The fact is that a wide swath of legal and social thinking currently argues precisely that those individuals and groups perceived to be "historically-disadvantaged" are indeed to be treated preferentially to others, in virtually all spheres of law and social relations. As Western civilization seems to be devolving into one vast affirmative-action project for such designated groups, the rights of the majority are trampled on, and classical liberal definitions of liberal democracy no longer adequately describe the Western state.

The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience
by Michael Ignatieff
New York: Henry Holt
229 pages, $24.95

For all its subtlety, one of the main points of the book appears to be a critique of virtually all forms of nationalism. Ignatieff does not seem to see that, with all its focus on legalism, economics and technology, the West itself has become a denationalized, meaningless, and identity-less milieu for most European peoples.

One would be searching for a healing rootedness which would not be dogmatically left-liberal and

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equalitarian, and which, indeed, might have many aspects which would, in today's unusual context, be considered "exclusivist" and "authoritarian." It seems unlikely that the so-called "erotic" sense of community can exist without some forms of subordination, exclusion, and closure of options. Yet today, we in the West are practically morally terrorized to regard the needs of strangers above those of our own kith and kin.

The proposed "civic nation" of Ignatieff is a cold chimera lacking meaning — as Western civic institutions will almost invariably wither as an ever-larger number of highly dissimilar immigrants enter the Western host-countries. In such a case, zones of safety might surprisingly quickly become zones of danger — as a look at America's inner-cities clearly shows.

The irony is that Canada has virtually replicated, in less than three decades, all the acrimony, frictions, and problems associated with multi-ethnic societies, which in the U.S. could be seen as partially the result of the anguished legacy of centuries of slavery.

Insofar as the West can offer its own model of healing rootedness, a middle way between hatred of others and self-hatred, to the non-West, this kind of phenomenon could potentially be a salve for the non-Western traditional societies, who would be typically approaching it from the direction of lessening their own particularist extremisms. Both West and non-West alike also have to learn how to cope with the all-pervasiveness of the U.S./big city-derived global pop-culture, i.e. how to constructively maintain (or restore) one's authentic identities before this flood of alluring junk.

As far as Ignatieff's hope for "useful forgetting" it may be remembered that a nation or people with no living, inspiring past has no future, something which, of course, the designated minorities are well aware of (as the push for Afrocentric and similar curricula shows), but which the European majorities of Western countries appear to have largely forgotten.

Despite these criticisms, Ignatieff's thought has clearly evolved much beyond conventional liberal internationalism — one of the defining themes of the new Canadian state which arose in the wake of the Pearson-Trudeau years (1963-1984). One sometimes gets the impression that Ignatieff need only have pressed his arguments a little further to arrive at a profoundly traditionalist view of human nature and its problems.

Another irony is that, with the dumbing down through pop-culture and dismal education today, fewer and fewer people will even be able to appreciate the subtleties of this highly thoughtful book. TSC

Classical Education
and Why It Matters

Book Review by John Attarian

The controversy over what schools and colleges should teach is one of the most important questions in any society. The outcome has enormous influence over what the young will know and how they will view reality, themselves and their society, and thus over the path their society will take in the future.

That leftists know this is revealed by their intense concern for course content. Propelled by a power-craving agenda of using schools to establish a new social order, John Dewey and his disciples gutted public school curricula of substance. More recently his followers have championed multiculturalism and political correctness at all levels from grade school through graduate school. As a result, far too many younger Americans are ignorant of their own country and its culture and tradition, yet despise them as racist, oppressive, sexist, and "ethnocentric," and support the policies of national suicide: open immigration,

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affirmative action, unlimited tolerance, globalization, and more.

Unfortunately, due to the politicization of education, immigration-driven "diversity," and the growing preoccupation over the last century or so with careerist "training," many Americans no longer have any idea what a core education is, and the curriculum itself is an amorphous hodgepodge.

Time was when the curriculum had a compact core of Latin, Greek, mathematics and literature, which not only gave students an invaluable rigorous training in attentive reading, thinking and expression (as opposed to mere political fashions or "career skills"), but steeped them in their culture's greatest works, which held up models for emulation.

The Devil Knows Latin: Why America Needs the Classical Tradition

by E. Christian Kopff
Wilmington, DE: Intercollegiate Studies Institute
313 pages, $24.95

In this profoundly learned and wide-ranging book, University of Colorado (Boulder) classics professor E. Christian Kopff makes a vigorous case for the classical curriculum and the tradition it reflects. Kopff's purpose is "to suggest that the permanent things embedded in tradition are good things for human life, and that they have not entirely vanished from the Western landscape." He argues the usefulness of tradition, exposes some of the lethal errors of America's ruling elites, and provides cogent recommendations for restoring the culture.

Far from being an enslaving prison, as moderns have it, tradition, Kopff argues, is a saving source of inspiration and information on how to live as one ought. True creativity depends on mastering and assimilating one's tradition, and then building on it. Healthy cultures drew on their pasts for inspiration and instruction, and the Founding Fathers drew on the classics for guidance in crafting our Constitution.

As for the curriculum, Kopff agrees with the dictum that education must be practical — but adds that "nothing is more practical than the study of Latin." Over half of all English words have Latin origins, and most of the rest are derived from Greek. A solid grounding in Latin and Greek facilitates mastery not only of English but of most European languages. More importantly, it keeps open lines of communication with our ancestors. The much-touted Great Books program did make the best ancient works accessible to a wider audience, albeit filtered imperfectly through translations. But it was, Kopff rightly observes, "civilization on the cheap." Worse, as University of Chicago Professor Paul Shorey predicted in 1917, replacement of texts in the original languages with translations was only the entering wedge for driving Western civilization from the curriculum.

The jettisoning of the classical curriculum reflected modernity's assiduous pursuit of the Enlightenment project of overturning the Western tradition. One consequence of the Enlightenment, Kopff shows, is an increasing preoccupation with supposedly universally-applicable abstract ideas rather than realities, well illustrated by the dominion of abstractions in economics. As he rightly observes, mainstream economics is stubbornly loyal to free trade, which works well in economic theory's tidy never-never land and is therefore deemed valid under all circumstances, and hang the complications of the messier real world.

As the tradition the Enlightenment project hated was inspired by Christianity, it stands to reason that modernity's war on tradition will be especially relentless against religion. Kopff lists numerous efforts by federal courts to suppress free exercise of religion by Americans, their communities, and the states, such as forbidding prayer in schools and at commencements. His solution? "Simple — repeal the Fourteenth Amendment. Religion will flourish, and so will the republic."

Kopff devotes much effort to criticizing postmoderns, but British classicists Sir James Fraser and Gilbert Murray get stern scrutiny too. They made brilliant contributions, but their works reflect an anti-Christian standpoint. They spread the idea that thinking people could get along without Christianity for their ethics — but recanted when the horrors of the Twentieth Century exploded this facile optimism. The

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lesson Kopff draws is that classicists are not immune to error about major issues of the human condition and the nature of reality; they need to absorb the lessons of Christianity. Greek and Roman classics are necessary, but are not enough.

Turning to role models and popular culture, Kopff rightly lauds Russell Kirk and devotes much space to an intriguing investigation and evaluation of American movies. He concludes by sensibly recommending that we revamp the elementary school curriculum to focus on English, Greek, Latin, history and mathematics, and break the education schools' monopoly on teacher certification. Moreover, churches should teach the "Sacred Tongues": Latin, Greek, Hebrew and German. Kopff provides guidance for persons wanting to learn Greek and Latin on their own.

All this is meritorious and valuable. Kopff's case for the classical tradition is articulate and persuasive. His criticisms of the postmoderns and others are equally so. The one flaw in this powerful and welcome book is that Kopff does not address the threat to the classical tradition from a diverse population.

He does provide, in passing, evidence of massive immigration's corrosive cultural role. In 1960, Clifton Fadiman presented the Great Books program in his *Lifetime Reading Plan,* and unabashedly explained that the Great Books were Western because "We are Western men," and until recently "our minds were molded by Western ideas and images." In 1997, *The New Lifetime Reading Plan* by John S. Major explained that because America, "a nation of immigrants," has been "enriched" recently by immigrants from diverse cultures, "our country is now more profoundly multicultural than ever before." Hence the new, multicultural Great Books list would include many non-Western works.

Major is in effect citing immigration as a pretext for destroying the Western focus of the Great Books. Once America contains a substantial non-Western population, intellectuals hostile to the "ethnocentric" Western tradition that informs American culture and education can argue, as they have, that this tradition is no longer relevant to or representative of the new composition of the country, and demand that it be made more "diverse" and "inclusive." The continuity of a nation's culture depends heavily on the continuity of the ethnic and racial composition of its population. A tradition's survival depends on the continued presence of a population adhering to it. As long as the group practicing that tradition dominates the national population, that tradition will continue to inform and guide the national life. Should that majority group ever be displaced, however, that tradition's loss of dominion will necessarily follow.

Likewise, repeal of the Fourteenth Amendment, though desirable, will not suffice to restore "religion" — by which Kopff means, specifically, *Christianity* — to the public square, given our increasingly multiracial, which inescapably means multireligious, population. When virtually all pupils were descended from European and African-American Christians, prayer in public schools was viable. But what do we do when a growing share of the pupils hails from Islamic, Buddhist, and Hindu homes? The choice becomes either a vacuous prayer to a generic deity (which could only confuse Christian children and undermine their faith), or nothing. The use of chaplains in legislatures, commencement prayers, creches in public places, and so on becomes equally problematic. Religious traditions are practiced *by peoples,* and the continuity of the one depends on the continuity of the other. While massive Third World immigration continues, America's religious tradition will remain vulnerable. Demography has cultural consequences, which defenders of the Western tradition must address.

"The one flaw in this powerful and welcome book is that Kopff does not address the threat to the classical tradition from a diverse population."

Nevertheless, *The Devil Knows Latin,* both learned and commonsensical, is a valuable and timely contribution to the struggle to preserve the Western classical tradition. Traditionalists looking for intellectual ammunition should start here. TSC

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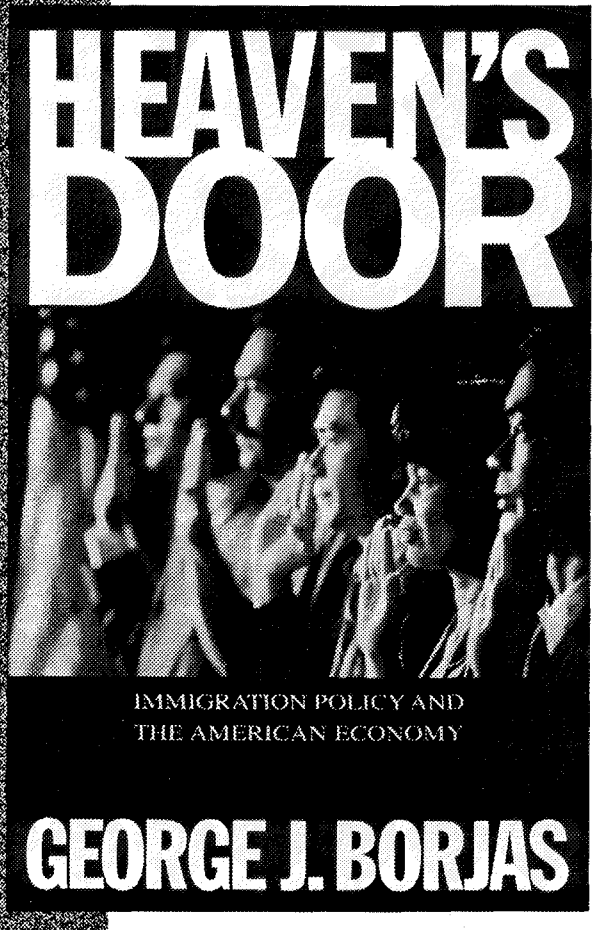
Heaven's Door

Immigration Policy and the American Economy

George J. Borjas



The U.S. took in more than a million immigrants per year in the late 1990s, more than at any other time in history. For humanitarian and many other reasons, this may be good news. But as George Borjas shows in *Heaven's Door*, it's decidedly mixed news for the American economy—and positively bad news for the country's poorest citizens.

Widely regarded as the country's leading immigration economist, Borjas presents the most comprehensive, up-to-date account of the economic impact of recent immigration on America. He reveals that the benefits of immigration have been greatly exaggerated and that, if we allow immigration to continue unabated and unmodified, we are supporting an astonishing transfer of wealth from the poorest people in the country, who are disproportionately minorities, to the richest.

Heaven's Door will stimulate new debate about immigration to the U.S. and substantially raise the quality and tone of the debate.

"This book may well be controversial, but its clarity, sincerity, and relevance for anyone fascinated with immigration issues is rock solid."
—Alan Simpson, Former U.S. Senator

"No one interested in the consequences of American immigration policy, present or proposed, should be without a well-worn copy."
—U.S. Representative Lamar Smith

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